Retirees file graft case vs SSS strike leaders

STORY ON PAGE A2

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PHILIPPINE DAILY INQUIRER

BALANCED NEWS, FEARLESS VIEWS

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ALAM KO NA ANG MEANING NG FILIBUSTER

Noli meets filibusterismo in Serge O

By A. Nocum and C. Avendaño

IF nothing else, Sen. Noli de Castro is enriching his vocabulary.

Interviewed over radio dzBB, De Castro, a

NOLI/ A15

WHAT'S INSIDE

- **Gov't loses trail of 2 Ping boys** NEWS / A3
- **RP forex reserves OK—IMF** BUSINESS / B1
- **RP may lose P750-M loan** NEWS / A6
- **DECS usec quits** NEWS / A6

9 big banks fined for $ speculation

Macapagal issues strong warning; stuns stock market

By Clarissa S. Batino

THE BANGKO Sentral ng Pilipinas yesterday slapped fines on nine big banks for violating foreign exchange regulations after President Macapagal-Arroyo warned currency speculators to beware.

In an unprecedented move, the BSP identified the three foreign and six local banks found speculating against the peso from June to July when the local currency slumped to as low as P54 against the US dollar.

The foreign banks penalized by the BSP were Citibank, P210,000; Hong Kong Shanghai Banking Corp., P90,000; and Standard Chartered Bank, P30,000.

The local banks meted out fines were Banco de Oro, P3,210,000; Export and Industry Bank, P720,000; Bank of the Philippine Islands, P30,000; United Coconut Planters Bank, P30,000; China Banking Corp., P30,000; and Equitable PCI Bank, P30,000.

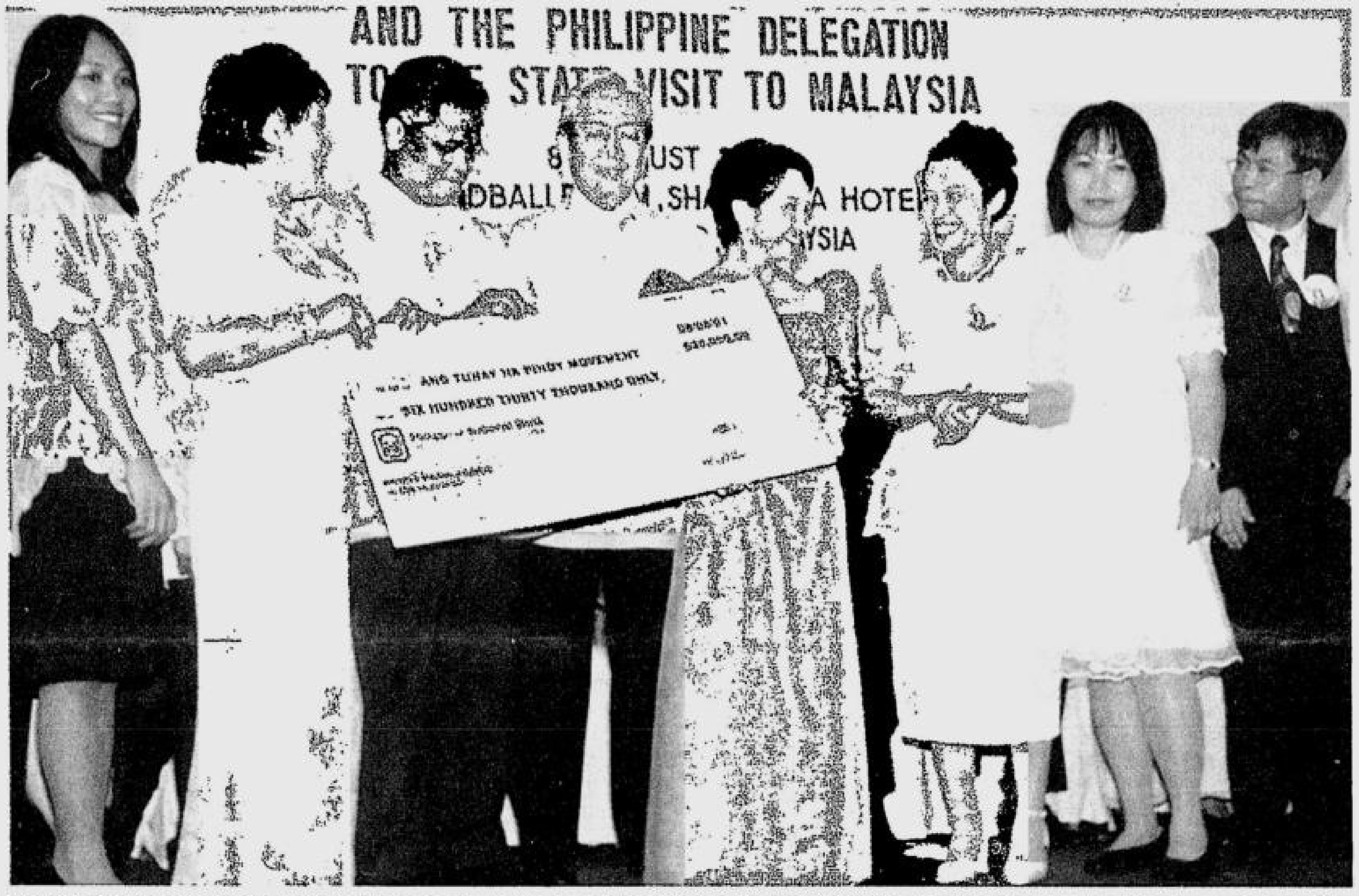
"Let this serve as a warning to these banks and the rest of the banking sector that the BSP is taking currency speculation seriously. Enough is enough," BSP Governor Rafael Buenaventura said.

In Kuala Lumpur, President Macapagal-Arroyo issued an even stronger warning that stunned the Philippine stock market and even Buenaventura.

Speaking at a news conference at the end of her three-day state visit to Malaysia, Ms Macapagal refused to rule out imposing a currency peg to protect the peso from falling against the dollar.

"I don't envision anything, but I don't want to rule out anything a la Mahathir. So let the speculators be warned," the President said when asked if she would impose a peg.

9 BIG BANKS/ A15



"OVERSEAS investors," that's how President Macapagal-Arroyo calls the Overseas Filipino Workers in Malaysia, the largest in Asia, who on the eve of her departure, present her with a symbolic check as their pledge to raise a common fund with which to invest in their home country. MALACAÑANG PHOTO

Gloria reports KL trip a big success

By PDI Mindanao Bureau and Cathy Yamsuan

DAVAO CITY—"I am glad to report we accomplished everything which we set out to achieve and much more," President Gloria Macapagal-Arroyo declared after her arrival here yesterday afternoon from a three-day state visit to Malaysia in pursuit of "peace and development."

Among the achievements, the President announced:

- Proposed joint ventures for the establishment of palm oil plantations in Mindanao.
- The resumption of direct flights between Malaysia and Mindanao.
- The establishment of a gas pipeline between the two countries.
- Establishment of a de facto embassy in the Malaysian state of Sabah to protect the thousands of undocumented Filipino workers there. *(Story on Page A17.)*

During the President's visit to Malaysia, Manila also signed a ceasefire pact with the Moro Islamic Liberation Front (MILF), which had waged a rebellion in Mindanao for the last 30 years.

"When I talked about peace, I talked about Mindanao. When I talked about trade, I talked about Mindanao. When I talked about investments I talked about Mindanao. When I talked about

GLORIA/ A17

Nacorda: FBI also suspects military

By Alexander M. Young and Julie Alipala-Inot
PDI Mindanao Bureau

LAMITAN, Basilan—After accusing top military officials of conniving with the Abu Sayyaf, Catholic priest and kidnap victim Cirilo Nacorda claimed that even the US Federal Bureau of Investigation was pursuing the conspiracy angle as early as June this year.

Nacorda, who managed to escape from the bandit group during its June 2 attack on the St. Peter's Parish Church and Dr. Jose Ma. Torres Memorial Hospital in Lamitan, said the FBI told him about information that could indicate a conspiracy between certain military officials and leaders of the Abu Sayyaf.

He said he came out in the open after the siege early this month of Barangay Balobo because he could "no longer stomach the activities of the military in Basilan."

He claimed that the conspiracy

NACORDA/ A18

GMA: No Anwar meeting without Mahathir OK

KUALA LUMPUR, Malaysia—President Gloria Macapagal-Arroyo said she would not meet with the wife of Malaysia's jailed politician, Anwar Ibrahim, unless the Malaysian government gave the green light.

Thus did Ms Macapagal draw a hard line Thursday in contrast to her predecessor, ousted President Joseph Estrada, who was the chief campaigner in the region for the release of Anwar.

President Macapagal's diplomatic tact appears to have healed a rift between the two Southeast Asian countries since Estrada had also received Azizah Ismail, Anwar's wife, after Anwar was jailed in 1998.

The President said that if she was confronted by a request from Azizah to visit her in Manila, she would run it by Prime Minister

GMA/ A17

Ping asked to account for 480 kg of shabu

By Nelson F. Flores, Martin P. Marfil and Andrea Trinidad

AMID charges linking Sen. Panfilo Lacson to money laundering and drug trafficking, a National Police Commission (Napolcom) official yesterday asked the senator to shed light on the questionable "burning" of some 480 kilos of shabu seized by the Philippine National Police last year from four suspected international drug pushers.

Napolcom Vice Chairman and Executive Officer Rogelio Pureza asked Lacson, who was PNP chief when the shabu (methamphetamine hydrochloride) was reportedly burned early this year, to put to rest supposed speculation that the confiscated drug stash was "recycled" for sale by allegedly unscrupulous members of the PNP.

The Provincial Board of Pangasinan recently urged the PNP, the Department of Justice and the Dangerous Drug Board of the Philippines to conduct a probe to estab-

PING/ A16

Lacson admits going to HK on snooping mission

By Armand N. Nocum and Carlito S. Pablo

IT ISN'T only military intelligence chief Col. Victor Corpus who has recently been snooping around allegedly suspicious bank accounts in other countries.

Sen. Panfilo "Ping" Lacson Jr. yesterday made a curious admission in the course of denying Corpus' allegation that the senator was in Hong Kong from July 26 to 28 to empty his alleged multi-million dollar accounts held in Citibank.

"I admit I was in Hong Kong with my staff to conduct follow-up operations involving an official of government who was linked to a recent pay-off," Lacson said in a phone interview.

In an ironic twist, the senator, who claims to be the target of a Palace demolition job, said he was there to "conduct an investigation into the (bank) accounts of a certain official in the (Macapagal) Cabinet."

The week Lacson was in Hong Kong was the same week that the 12th Congress opened. He had already been sworn in as senator, and had thrown in his cap as Philippine National Police Chief more than six months before.

Lacson, whom Corpus has accused of money laundering to the tune of hundreds of millions of dollars, said he was not there to withdraw deposits, since he has "no accounts there, in the first place."

He said his chief of staff, lawyer Aris Gana and executive assistant Jerome Tan accompanied him to Hong Kong.

Lacson yesterday sent out copies of a letter from lawyer Kenneth Fagan, group counsel of the Citibank, Asia-Pacific Region.

"We have conducted a search of our records in New York, California, Hong Kong and Ontario, Canada and have not found the account numbers referred to in your

LACSON/ A19

TOGETHER for the good of the many, for the making of the PDI into an institution, union and management panels sign the CBA on Thursday. From left (standing): Abelardo Ulanday, Shirman Tan, Jesse Rebustillo, Evelyn Escueta, lawyers Roberto Parel and Cezar Maravilla, Charles Buban, Michael Lim Ubac, Lita Pascual, Dona Pazzibugan and Norman Bordadora.
From left (sitting): Prescy Frago, Stella Panlilio, PDI president Alexandra Prieto-Romualdez, PDI senior vice-president David Valdes, PDI union president Marc Anthony Reyes, Cynthia Balana, Volt Contreras and Christine Herrera.

PDI, union panels ink new CBA

FOR the past two months, it kept the INQUIRER'S editorial and business offices abuzz with anticipation as sizzling as the paper's front page headlines.

Hot off the press, so to speak, is the new collective bargaining agreement signed by the management and labor union of the Philippine Daily Inquirer.

After 16 meetings at the negotiating table, both panels yesterday signed a three-year CBA, which is 40 percent higher than the previous CBA package. It was the company's fifth CBA in PDI's 15-year history.

PDI/ A15

Second FRONT PAGE

MAY OBJECTION!

Wage bill a sellout, says KMU

By Philip C. Tubeza and Rocky Nazareno

"A SELLOUT."

This was how the militant Kilusang Mayo Uno described Albay Rep. Krisel Lagman-Luistro's proposed daily living wage bill in Congress.

"Lagman-Luistro's bill is not a wage bill at all, but an unprincipled compromise favoring employers and big capitalists. She's begging for alms on the workers' behalf and this we do not want," said KMU chair and Bayan Muna representative-elect Crispin Beltran.

"While it is true that reducing the various tax deductions from the basic pay will help, it's still not enough. Workers need hard currency in their hands. Lagman-Luistro, even as she professes to help the workers, is treading on the wrong path," Beltran said.

Lagman-Luistro yesterday clarified that the actual wage increase for workers under her bill could go as high as P462.98, with a wage component of P62.98.

Earlier, she said her bill would give workers at least P400 in cash and non-cash benefits and all that was needed was to look for a source for the remaining P100 to bring the wage to P500, the daily cost of living in Metro Manila for a family of six.

The labor sector has been clamoring for a P125-across-the-board minimum wage increase. The current daily minimum wage is P250 in Metro Manila.

Beltran said Luistro-Lagman's House Bill 1377 "reflected more the position of employers and business groups against wage hikes than the demand of workers for an actual increase in their basic pay."

"The bill implies that it seeks to assist workers in coping with the daily cost of living, but it certainly does not. Workers will not be getting any actual wage hike, only tax deductions. Their wages will still be far from sufficient to cover the cost of living. The bill is not at all for a daily living wage," Beltran said.

Retirees file case vs SSS strikers

By Gerald G. Lacuarta

A GROUP of retirees filed yesterday a graft complaint against the leaders of the three-day strike at the Social Security System last week, citing a civil service law that prohibits government personnel from going on strike.

The Philippine Association of Retired Persons (PARP), in a letter-complaint to Ombudsman Aniano Desierto, said the strike adversely affected the 23 million SSS members, particularly those who were at SSS offices following up on their papers when the workers walked off their jobs to demand the ouster of SSS president Vitaliano Nañagas.

"The rule of law, which mandates sanctions in illegal strikes, should prevail," said Amado Cabaero, PARP national president, in the letter-complaint.

The complaint came after the Civil Service Commission said the SSS strikers may be sanctioned only after a complaint was filed by an SSS member.

"PARP requests that this clear defiance of the law should not be allowed to pass without sanctions, otherwise government workers might think they could break the law on strikes with impunity," Cabaero said.

'Forgiven'

Cabaero said, however, that the rank and file SSS employees "should be forgiven (as) they were only misled by their leaders and their leftist cohorts."

"These leaders of the strike, particularly from ACCESS, egged on the rank and file to follow them in the walkout," Cabaero said.

ACCESS is the SSS union, Alert and Concerned Employees for a Better SSS. It counts thousands of members nationwide.

Cabaero said the strike leaders should be held liable for violation of Section 4 of the Civil Service Code.

Section 4 states that "the terms and conditions of employment in government, including any political subdivision or instrumentality thereof, ... are governed by law and employees therein shall not strike for the purpose of securing changes therein."

He also cited a Supreme Court ruling in the case of SSS Employees Association vs Court of Appeals, that "employees in the civil service may not resort to strikes, walkouts and other temporary work stoppages like workers in the private sector to pressure the government to accede to their demands."

Strike leader

Cabaero, however, did not name any of the strike leaders in the PARP complaint. He only made mention of SSS executive vice president Horace Templo, whom he described as a "strike supporter."

Cabaero said that before the walkout, leaders of ACCESS and Templo met with PARP officers on Aug. 2 at the Sulo Hotel.

He said the SSS workers assured PARP the work stoppages were only being done during their one-hour lunch break.

Cabaero said PARP officers nevertheless asked ACCESS leaders not to push through with the strike as this would adversely affect the delivery of services to the millions of SSS members nationwide.

"But strike they did, when they knew that the remedy for their grievances was to refer them to the Public Sector Management Council for appropriate action," Cabaero said.

The strike did result in the SSS employees getting their wish—the ouster of Nañagas.

Absent poll commissioner bucks Recto proclamation

By Gerald G. Lacuarta

ONE of the two Comelec commissioners who failed to vote on the resolution that proclaimed Sen. Ralph Recto the 12th place winner in the Senate elections has questioned the proceedings that led to the resolution's approval.

Commissioner Mehol Sadain has issued a strongly worded memorandum to Comelec Chair Alfredo Benipayo scoring the latter's handling of the agency's affairs, particularly the manner by which Resolution 01-006 was passed on July 20.

"I am registering my objection to (NBOC Resolution 01-006) because I worry about the trend being established by your chairmanship a trend that is the complete antithesis of the spirit of collegiality that, under the law, should prevail in the proceedings of the commission," Sadain said.

Sadain's memorandum was dated July 24, four days after the resolution declaring Recto the 12th place winner was passed. The memo was leaked only yesterday by an INQUIRER source in the poll body.

Questioned

NBOC Resolution 01-006 has been questioned by the opposition Puwersa ng Masa for having been approved by only three of the seven commissioners sitting as members of the National Board of Canvassers (NBOC).

The three were Benipayo and Commissioners Rex Borra and Florentino Tuason Jr.

Rufus Rodriguez, lawyer for PnM Sen. Loi Ejercito, yesterday urged the Comelec to act on his motion to recall Resolution 01-006 before Aug. 20, the end of the 30-day period for the filing of certiorari with the Supreme Court to question Comelec rulings.

The controversial resolution was passed on July 20, when Sadain and another commissioner, Ralph Lantion, were absent.

Sadain had excused himself to accompany his ailing wife to the hospital, while Lantion, for unknown reasons, was in Russia.

Two commissioners, Luz Tancangco and Rufino Javier, dissented against the resolution, resulting in a 3-2 vote in favor of the ruling. Benipayo immediately transmitted the resolution to the Senate in time for the opening of Congress on July 23.

Sadain said he was surprised to hear on the radio on July 23 that the Comelec en banc, sitting as the NBOC, had decided on the rankings of the last two winning senators, placing Recto in the 12th spot and Sen. Gregorio Honasan in the 13th.

No notice

"I wanted to vote on the resolution," Sadain said. "There was no notice that the case was going to be discussed on July 20."

Sadain said the "questionable procedure that was adopted to get the resolution approved and promulgated renders the result reprehensible and taints it with deceit."

"Why choose a time when two commissioners were absent to have such an important resolution approved and promulgated?" he asked. "If they were absent, why not notify them of the resolution or send a draft of the same to them for their comment or their vote?"

Sadain said that granting there was an urgency to decide who the 12th and 13th place winners were, he said the issue could have been addressed on the Saturday or Sunday before July 23.

He also questioned why the draft of NBOC Resolution 01-006 was not routed among the commissioners earlier so they have could studied it and made their comments about it.

Comelec eyes computerization

TO AVOID a repeat of the confusion and fraud-marred May 14 polls, the Commission on Elections is mulling reviving the computerized Voters Registration and Identification System (VRIS) in time for the 2004 presidential election.

The Comelec will meet with the winning bidder in the project, a consortium of the country's top IT firms led by Photokina Corp., on Aug. 20.

Chair Alfredo Benipayo said yesterday the Comelec will meet with the Photokina group after it submitted all documents pertaining to the VRIS last month.

Aside from Photokina, the other members of the consortium are IBM Philippines, Unisys, Polaroid, Sagem and Headstrong. The consortium submitted the lowest bid of P6.5 billion for the five-year project.

The Comelec en banc issued the notice of award in favor of the consortium in November last year but contract negotiations were stalled by the unavailability of funds.

Benipayo then decided to shelve the Comelec Modernization Program, which includes the VRIS as one of its flagship projects.

Yesterday Benipayo said the Comelec was ready to review the VRIS.

"We scheduled the review for the afternoon of Aug. 20. We want to know what they (Photokina) want to talk to us about," Benipayo said.

The VRIS project, conceptualized under the term of past Comelec chair Harriet Demetriou, would manage the records of some 35 million voters nationwide and purge the list of multiple and fictitious registrants.

Among its components are a searchable database that can find an individual record from among 35 million registrants in 10 to 15 minutes; data capture technology that can digitally store pictures, fingerprints and signatures; and tamper-proof, counterfeit-resistant IDs which could be used until the 2010 elections. *Gerald G. Lacuarta*

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COPS ON THE RUN

Gov't loses trail of 2 Lacson aides

By Michael Lim Ubac

ONE of two senior police officers now on the run is hiding in Canada, while the other's whereabouts are unknown.

Justice Secretary Hernando Perez admitted this to reporters yesterday after the Bureau of Immigration failed to track the missing police officer, Senior Supt. Michael Ray Aquino, a former protégé and subordinate of Sen. Panfilo Lacson.

Perez could not confirm if Aquino escaped to Canada like his colleague, Senior Supt. Cesar Mancao, another former Lacson protégé and underling also wanted for questioning in several cases.

"We don't have any confirmation (if Aquino really left the country). He said in a television interview that he was still in the country," Perez said.

Information gathered by the National Bureau of Investigation, however, showed Aquino had left the country.

NBI Director Reynaldo Wycoco told the Inquirer Aquino and Mancao left the Philippines early in June.

AQUINO

MANCAO

"Mancao is now hiding somewhere in Canada. Aquino's exact location cannot be found. He could be in the US or in Canada. This is the information gathered by my agents in the field," Wycoco said.

Mancao and Aquino are wanted for questioning in connection with the kidnapping and murder of public relations practitioner Salvador "Bubby" Dacer and his driver, Manuel Corbito, on Nov. 24 last year.

Aside from the Dacer case, the two are needed to shed light on several cases involving crimes allegedly masterminded by their former boss, Lacson.

In the latest case, Lacson stands accused of stashing millions of dollars abroad in several bank accounts either singly or jointly with his wife, Alice, and former President Joseph Estrada, when he was head of several police agencies.

The deposits were said to total $728.5 million.

Perez had earlier issued a hold-departure order against Mancao and Aquino in connection with the Dacer case.

The two managed to elude authorities, however, and board a Cathay Pacific Airways flight to Hong Kong at the Mactan International Airport in Cebu.

From Hong Kong, the two reportedly took a connecting flight to the United States.

Mancao admitted in an overseas interview that they had used fake papers for the Cebu-Hong Kong leg of their journey.

The two officers were implicated in the Dacer-Corbito killings by Supt. Glenn Dumlao, like the two, a member of the defunct Presidential Anti-Organized Crime Task Force, which was headed by Lacson during the administration of Estrada.

Aside from the two, Dumlao also implicated Supt. Teofilo Viña, former head of Task Force Visayas of the PAOCTF.

Perez vowed to sack immigration officials found to have aided Mancao and Aquino in their escape. "Definitely (heads will roll) if we could prove that someone (helped) them escape," Perez said.

Police and customs officers were also suspected of assisting the two senior officers in their flight out of the country.

PNP wants tougher law vs drug pushing

By Alcuin Papa

THE PHILIPPINE National Police is supporting calls to give the country's drug laws more teeth.

Director General Leandro Mendoza, PNP chief, said he would seek the amendment of Republic Act 6425, otherwise known as the Dangerous Drugs Act, to make it stricter.

Under the law, anyone caught in possession of at least 200 grams of shabu would be penalized by either life imprisonment or death penalty. Mendoza wants to lower the minimum amount to 15 grams.

"We need to study this. Fifteen grams can be consumed by a drug dependent in one month. If a suspect is caught with 15 grams, this could be considered drug pushing and liable for the death penalty," Mendoza told reporters.

He also admitted that there have been cases where drug pushers were caught with less than 200 grams and were able to seek bail.

"Nothing happens (with the present law). Drug pushers are caught but are able to avail (themselves) of bail. Then it's like we are only playing," stressed Mendoza.

MENDOZA

He also appealed to the 12th Congress to amend the current law.

"I am in favor of lowering the amount of drugs that a suspect may hold to get the death penalty to make our campaign against illegal drugs more effective," he said.

The PNP's National Drug Law Enforcement and Prevention Coordination Center, or DEP Center, had called for more stringent laws for illegal drug offenders.

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Lone witness vs 'Jimpol' is Chavit

GOVERNMENT prosecutors yesterday said that they would present Ilocos Sur Gov. Luis "Chavit" Singson as lone witness to prove the "indirect bribery" case against former presidential legislative liaison officer Jimmy Policarpio.

They will also present as evidence Singson's ledger to prove that he had accepted P2 million a month for nine months, from November 1998 to July 1999.

Special Prosecutor III Raymundo Julio Olaguer said the government did not need to prove that the money Policarpio regularly received from Singson, came from "jueteng" proceeds.

"So whether it was jueteng money or not is already irrelevant. What is relevant is that the accused is a public officer and that he received money, substantially P2 million a month," Presiding Justice Francis Garchitorena said in open court after hearing the prosecution clarify its case.

Olaguer said that Policarpio's acceptance of the amount of around P2 million a month, was enough to convict him for indirect bribery.

After that, Policarpio's lawyers told the Sandiganbayan's First Division their position—that Policarpio did not receive any money from Singson in connection with his office.

So if there was no money received in connection with his office, there was no crime, they said.

Among the lawyers who tried to enter their appearance to defend Policarpio was his mother, Lumen Policarpio.

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PHOTO OP: President Macapagal-Arroyo awards a symbolic key to an awardee of the government overseas worker housing project, before hell broke loose.

Gloria mobbed, misses dinner at unruly KL party

By Cathy C. Yamsuan

KUALA LUMPUR (via PLDT)—What's a party without picture taking? And why pass up the chance to have a picture taken with President Macapagal-Arroyo?

Malaysia-based overseas Filipino workers who attended the Wednesday dinner held in the President's honor by the Philippine Embassy and the Filipino Community Leaders Forum in Kuala Lumpur could not be bothered that the free iced drink tasted bland or that the event started two hours late.

The important thing for them was that they were able to have their pictures taken with the President, who willingly posed for posterity until her security detail hustled her away.

Philippine officials present at the affair all agreed that it was a security nightmare as the OFWs surged toward the President while she was having dinner at the Grand Ballroom of the Shangri-La Hotel here.

Armed with cameras, the OFWs positioned themselves around Ms Macapagal and asked other guests at her table to click away.

The President was game—so game that she ultimately missed her dinner. Minutes earlier, she delivered a speech praising the Malaysia-based OFWs for their economic contributions to their homeland.

"At first it was just one or two groups, then several groups, and then nearly all the people in the ballroom were swarming around her table with their cameras," an unidentified male guest recalled in Filipino.

Soon, even the Caucasian, Indian and Malaysian guests were also asking to pose for a picture with the President.

Man on the mike

A male embassy employee grabbed a microphone and tried to put order in the situation.

"Please, all those who already had their pictures taken, proceed toward the left side of the ballroom. Let those who also want their pictures taken with the President get near her," he said in Taglish.

Later, he begged: "Please, my *kababayan* (compatriots), just a little cooperation from you. Otherwise, we will be forced to stop the picture taking. Please let the other guests have a chance."

But still more guests surged forward, from the well-heeled and bejeweled set to the female domestics dressed in pants and leather slippers.

The embassy employee turned tough: "I'm warning everyone, we will be forced to stop this whole thing if no one pays attention. You only have yourselves to blame. We were able to come here in an organized fashion, so let's also leave that way."

He was ignored.

A total of 150 tables, with 10 chairs each, were arranged inside the ballroom and the surrounding corridors.

The affair was to have started at 6 p.m. but the President arrived two hours later. Her aides said she was caught up in a series of meetings just before the event.

Getaway

Ms Macapagal had posed with barely half the number of the guests who wanted pictures taken with her when members of the Presidential Security Group decided to escort her out of the ballroom.

Annoyed, a female guest exclaimed in Filipino: "Wait, wait! This is once in a lifetime!"

As the President walked away, some of the guests approached Ambassador Jose Brillantes and complained about missing their chance.

The more persistent ones chased after the President, not minding the PSG members encircling her.

"*Ang ganda n'yo* (You're so beautiful), Ma'am!" a woman shouted.

A PSG guard radioed another not to allow the guests to get near the President.

One delighted female guest lugging a small camera ran toward her companions and gleefully reported her successful photo op with Ms. Macapagal.

Those with film to spare turned their attention on prominent guests like industrialist Raul Concepcion who joined the President's official party.

Guillermo Luz, executive director of the Makati Business Club, was both surprised and amused when some expatriates asked to pose with him.

"Why, do you know me?" he said.

"Yes, we saw you attending the President's (State of the Nation Address)," someone answered. "We watched it on the Internet."

Secretary Michael Defensor of the Housing and Urban Development Coordinating Council later told the INQUIRER that he was also approached by some of the guests.

"I thought they wanted to pose with me, so I was already smiling. It turned out they wanted me to take their picture," he said.

Gloria on 2004 plans: I'm eligible

KUALA LUMPUR (via PLDT)—"I am eligible."

President Macapagal-Arroyo's answer was short when she was asked at a round-table discussion with Malaysian journalists if she planned to run for President in 2004.

It was the first time Ms Macapagal gave a definitive answer about her political plans for 2004.

In previous interviews, she had refused to reveal her plans at the end of her term.

Under the Philippine Constitution, the President is allowed only one term.

Ms Macapagal became Chief Executive after People Power 2 drove President Joseph Estrada from power in January. She was Estrada's vice president.

Ms Macapagal can run for the Presidency in 2004. This was the consensus of observers who said she is only serving out the remaining years of the Estrada presidency.

At the round-table discussion, the President was asked if she thought People Power "will become a permanent fixture in the Philippines."

"No, it will not," she said. "Not unless dictatorship and plunder become permanent fixtures in the Philippines, which they are not."

The President also claimed a special affinity to newly installed Indonesian President Megawati Sukarnoputri.

"You know President Megawati and I have a special family bond. Aside from the fact that we are both women, our fathers were very good friends. They were like brothers," Ms Macapagal said.

"And both of us have expressed to each other that we wish to continue that friendship into our generation," she added.

Cathy C. Yamsuan

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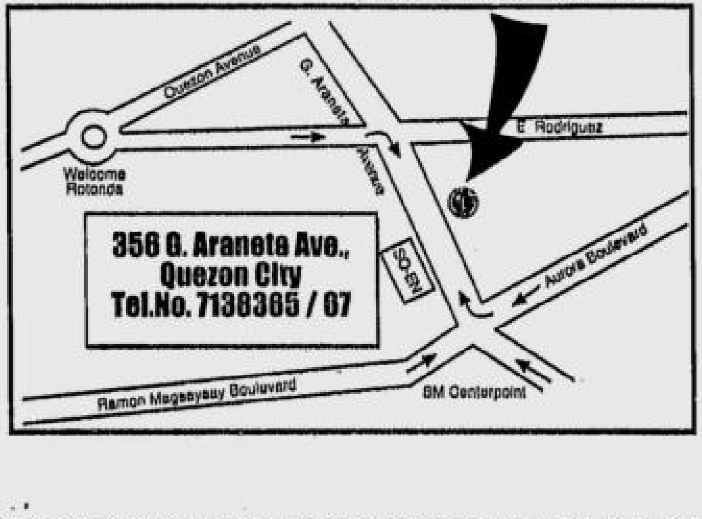

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No liens on Marcos assets —PCGG

By B. S. Rivera

THE PRESIDENTIAL Commission on Good Government yesterday cleared all Marcos assets recently put on the auction block of all legal entanglements, saying they were good "long-term investments."

PCGG Commissioner Ruben Carranza Jr. assured potential buyers that the real estate properties had been surrendered to the PCGG and do not entail any encumbrances.

He said the PCGG has reconstituted all the titles to the Baguio properties under the name of Independent Realty Corp., which was surrendered by Marcos crony Jose Yao Campos.

"The titles are clear. There are no encumbrances whatsoever, nothing," Carranza said, reacting to reports that businessmen were wary about the Marcos estate.

The PCGG is selling real estate properties in Baguio, Caloocan, Mandaluyong and Cebu for a combined floor price of P308.8 million, with the Baguio properties being the main attraction.

The Baguio city government has demanded a first crack at the Marcos mansions in the city as payment for the back taxes due the government for the said Marcos properties.

Carranza said the assets were being sold on an "as is, where is" basis, meaning the buyer should pay the taxes before being awarded the titles.

Some of the properties being auctioned were already put up for sale last year but did not attract buyers due to some problems in the titles.

IMELDA PETITION

Sandigan chief won't inhibit self

By Donna S. Cueto

SANDIGANBAYAN Presiding Justice Francis Garchitorena yesterday flatly rejected a motion by Imelda Marcos that he inhibit himself from the appeals process in the forfeiture case that his court had decided in favor of the government.

In open court, Garchitorena, chair of the Sandiganbayan's First Division, said there was no reason for him to inhibit himself because he was not biased against the Marcoses.

"The chairman of this division will not inhibit," he said after Ms Marcos' lawyer, Rodolfo Jimenez, stood up to represent his client.

Jimenez did not argue. He said he was leaving it up to the court to decide on Ms Marcos' motion.

The First Division will thus continue to hear the supplemental motion for reconsideration filed by Ms Marcos to get back funds found in Switzerland which have since been transferred to the government for disposition.

Ms Marcos had asked the court to dismiss the case and reverse its Sept. 19, 2000 ruling virtually giving to the Philippine government some $640 million currently being held in escrow.

In seeking Garchitorena's inhibition, Ms Marcos said the presiding justice and his wife, Vicky, now chief of the Presidential Management Staff, had signed a July 31, 1985 document calling for the impeachment of then President Ferdinand Marcos, Ms Marcos' late husband.

The document had reportedly charged that Marcos "permitted and even abetted" the systematic looting of the country's finances.

Yesterday, Garchitorena admitted having signed the document and even gave additional information about it.

He said the document was drafted in his law office and it was also signed by the late chief justice Marcelo Fernan, former senator Neptali Gonzales, Homobono Adaza and other well-known figures.

Garchitorena said he was not out to get Ms Marcos at all costs. He pointed out there were cases against her he had dismissed when there was no evidence against her.

Ms Marcos cited her conviction by the First Division in the Light Rail Transit Authority graft case where she was sentenced to 12 years in prison.

The Supreme Court reversed the decision on appeal and acquitted the former first lady. The decision was later questioned by government lawyers.

Garchitorena said the correctness or incorrectness of a decision of the court was not a ground for inhibition.

Lawyer Jimenez then said he trusted Garchitorena's judgment in the forfeiture case.

"(I) have always trusted you," Jimenez said, admitting he has known the presiding justice a long time.

"You flatter me, but you don't flatter me enough," Garchitorena told Jimenez.

Ms Marcos has a pending supplemental motion for reconsideration in the forfeiture case, which raised as new grounds the matter of prescription and the one-year ban before general elections for the filing of criminal cases.

Ms Marcos claimed the forfeiture petition filed by former solicitor general Francisco Chavez on Dec. 17, 1991 should have been dismissed for "improperly pleading" the late President Marcos since he was already dead at the time. Marcos died on Sept. 28, 1989 in Hawaii.

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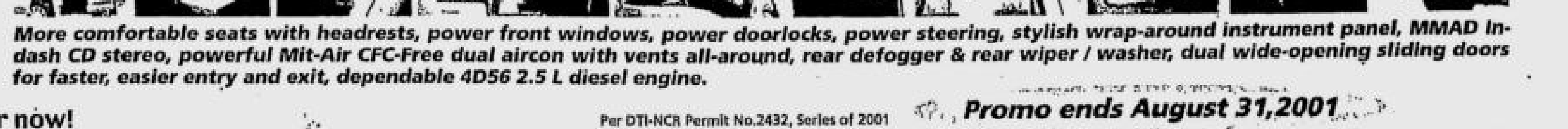

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Erap seeks permission to file libel suit

ESTRADA

By Donna S. Cueto

OUSTED President Joseph Estrada will file today a motion seeking permission to personally file a libel complaint in Pasig City against military intelligence chief Col. Victor Corpus and the INQUIRER.

Cleofe Verzola, Estrada's lawyer, said the former president has to appear before the Pasig City prosecutor's office on Monday at the earliest to subscribe to his complaint-affidavit in the libel suit.

She said Estrada has it at the start of the preliminary investigation of the case.

In their urgent ex-parte motion, Verzola said a short trip from the Veterans Memorial Medical Center to the Pasig City Prosecutor's Office was necessary.

"This will just take a few hours, not a whole day," she said yesterday after a hearing on the plunder case at the Sandiganbayan's Third Division.

Verzola was ready to present the pleading in open court yesterday, but a messenger failed to file the motion in time at the docket section.

The court yesterday heard the various motions of the prosecution and the defense regarding the subpoena for bank documents needed by the government lawyers to prove the plunder case.

The defense has objected to the prosecution's motion requesting a subpoena from the court, saying these documents were not relevant to the case and violated the law on secrecy of bank deposits.

But the prosecution said that the grounds raised by the defense were "either misplaced, gratuitous, or based on erroneous reading of the law."

Prosecutors have asked the court to summon several bank presidents to appear in court starting Aug. 13 until 17, and bring certain requested documents related to alleged Estrada accounts.

Airbus makes emergency landing at Naia

A GULF Air Airbus 340 carrying 264 passengers made an emergency landing at the Ninoy Aquino International Airport yesterday after an engine failed, officials said.

None of the passengers and 13 crew were hurt, Naia manager Edgardo Manda said.

The plane, bound for Qatar, had reached 3,030 meters when the pilot reported that one of the engines failed, Manda said.

The pilot had to dump 18,200 gallons of aviation fuel to lessen the danger of the plane catching fire in case of an explosion, Manda said.

The plane's passengers were transferred to a holding area at the airport while the plane underwent extensive repairs, he added.

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BIDDING ROW

RP stands to forfeit P750-M Japan loan

THE GOVERNMENT will lose a P750-million soft loan from Japan for the country's rural electrification program unless energy officials decide by October whether to scrap a controversial bidding or use the money for other projects, a congressman said yesterday.

The bidding for the supply of wood poles for rural electrification projects had been attended by controversy, delaying the projects and raising the possibility that the country would forfeit the $15-million from the Japan Bank for International Cooperation, according to Rep. Alfredo Marañon.

The loan, he said, expires in October.

Marañon (NPC, Negros Occidental), chair of the House committee on agriculture, food and fisheries, said the government should either call for a rebidding, if there's enough time, or scrap it altogether and use the funds for other supplies vital for rural electrification.

"We should not waste the opportunity to use the P750 million Japanese loan to fund vital rural electrification projects because of inaction and negligence," said Marañon.

He urged Energy Secretary Vincent Perez and administrator Noel Sanchez of the National Electrification Administration (NEA) to resolve the controversial bidding immediately. He said the NEA, and the electric cooperatives which depend on its financial and material assistance programs, would suffer greatly if the JBIC loan is allowed to lapse.

Besides, Marañon said, the government has already paid commitment fees for the JBIC loan. He said the loan is part of a $100 million JBIC loan package approved in 1992 for the NEA's rural electrification program.

He said nearly 10 years have passed since the JBIC granted the loans. But P750 million remains unused because of anomalous and scandal-ridden biddings for the supply of electric poles at the NEA.

Marañon said DOE and NEA officials owe it to the unlighted rural communities to prevent the P750 million loan from expiring.

"We cannot afford such a huge loss," Marañon said.

He recalled that the country already lost a $30 million (P1.5 billion) loan obtained by the NEA from the JBIC for the purchase of wood poles in 1996 because of anomalies. A congressional investigation of the controversial $30 million bidding confirmed the anomalies and the funds were irretrievably lost.

Marañon explained that in the light of the recent approval of the Omnibus Power Bill, it is incumbent on the DOE and the NEA to maximize the use of scarce resources to enable all rural electric co-ops to comply with their duties to energize the countryside.

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DECS usec quits

By Blanche S. Rivera

A TOP official of the Department of Education, Culture and Sports has left his post in the country's largest bureaucracy to go back to private practice.

Isagani Cruz, DECS undersecretary for programs and standards, submitted his resignation to President Macapagal-Arroyo Tuesday, shortly after national treasurer Sergio Edeza expressed his desire to leave the government.

Cruz, a long-time friend of Education Secretary Raul Roco, spent only seven months in the DECS before relinquishing his post. His resignation takes effect at the end of the month.

Roco said Cruz has expressed his intention to go back to teaching at the De La Salle University, where he used to chair the department of literature and Philippine languages.

The DECS chief said he spoke to Cruz only last week and that he knew nothing of reports that Cruz decided to leave the agency because their work styles did not complement.

"I have known him for a long time, and he said he just wants to go back to teaching," Roco said, adding Cruz was a good man who was an asset to the DECS during his brief stay.

Cruz could not be reached for comment yesterday. His secretary said he was in a meeting when reporters tried to contact him.

The 56-year-old Cruz was among the first officials appointed to the DECS when Ms Macapagal was installed by a popular revolt in January.

He was recommended to the President by Roco himself and was part of the transition team that organized the DECS for the transfer of power.

Cruz is the author of 30 books and a winner of 12 Palanca awards for his plays, essays and short stories. He is also vice president and publisher of the DLSU press.

Cruz is the second presidential appointee who has left the government service after former Executive Secretary Renato de Villa.

Edeza has agreed to stay until the end of the year before going back to private practice was well.

THE DAILY GOSPEL

Friday, August 10, 2001
Lawrence, Deacon and Martyr

1st Reading: **2 Cor 9:6-10**
Gospel: **Jn 12:24-26**

Jesus said to his disciples, "Truly, I say to you, unless the grain of wheat falls to the earth and dies, it remains alone; but if it dies, it produces much fruit.

Those who love their life destroy it, and those who despise their life in this world keep it for everlasting life.

Whoever wants to serve me, let him follow me and wherever I am, there shall my servant be also. If anyone serves me, the Father will honor him."

Commentary:

In today's reading Jesus explains his mission of giving his life in order that it may bear fruit for many. It is a mission of love to the very end. He invites his disciples to follow this example. Eternal life belongs to those who accept God's love to the extent that they are willing to give up their life here on earth as an act of ultimate love. The Church chose this reading for the feast of Saint Lawrence because he in fact gave up his life to follow Jesus to the very end. He is thus in the position to explain the meaning of these words. As a martyr he bore witness to the true dynamics of life as an act of love.

We thank you Father for the testimony of Saint Lawrence. Teach us also the art of loving you to the very end.

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SUPREME COURT DOCTRINES

REMEDIAL LAW (EVIDENCE)—Circumstantial evidence—For circumstantial evidence to convict, the Rules of Court require that: (1) there is more than one circumstance; (2) the facts from which the inferences are derived are proven; and (3) the combination of all the circumstances is such as to produce a conviction beyond reasonable doubt. While the cited circumstances establish the friendship between the accused and the trust that accused-appellant reposed upon accused-at-large, they are insufficient to merit the conclusion that accused-appellant conspired with accused-at-large by affixing his signatures on the latter's checks knowingly and with an intent to defraud. The prosecution failed to show by the conduct of accused-appellant before, during and after the commission of the crime that he was a participant to the defraudation. It certainly cannot be conclusively inferred from proof of his friendship with accused-at-large, or from his adamant refusal to pay or to even recognize the existence of the debt. [Citations omitted.] [Justice Gonzaga-Reyes, Third Division, People v. Gulion, G.R. No. 141183, January 18, 2001]

DIGEST BY R.B. VERA

ROSE PORTEOUS INQUEST

Tycoon's nurse tells of bribe offer

PERTH, Australia—An agent acting for the Philippines-born widow of Australian mining tycoon Lang Hancock offered a nurse cash to change evidence at an inquiry into his death, an inquest was told here Thursday.

Nurse Michael Schneider, who treated Hancock in his final days, said an agent for the now remarried Rose Porteous had made the suggestion during a phone call.

Schneider also told the Western Australian Coroner's Court that 82-year-old Hancock, one of Australia's wealthiest men, told him in the days before his death that he wanted to separate from his wife.

Heated argument

He recounted a heated argument between the Hancocks in which a distressed Lang Hancock had asked his wife why a housekeeping increase from $1.3 million (US$650,000) to $1.4 million (US$700,000) a year was not enough.

Coroner Alastair Hope is in the seventh week of a probe into the death of Hancock on March 27, 1992, at his Perth mansion.

Hancock's daughter, Gina Rinehart, is trying to show Porteous' actions hastened her father's death.

Schneider said he had been contacted about changing his statement after telling police that Porteous had screamed and abused Hancock about money in the days before he died.

The witness said he had seen Porteous marching int her husband's sickroom and kissing him painfuy on his obviously ulcerated mouth—before shuting at him about a decision he had made.

He said Hancock had told his wife he would not ctnge the decision, and asked her why a housekeping increase of $100,000 (US$50,000) to $1.4 nllion (US$700,000) was insufficient.

Schneider said that, after the incident, Hancock hd complained his wife was a "mad woman" who ws affecting his health.

Stressed out

The nurse said Hancock had told him: "She's sessing me out. She won't let me get better. I've pt to do something about it."

Schneider denied being paid by Rinehart for giving vidence, saying he did it "because I liked that bloke."

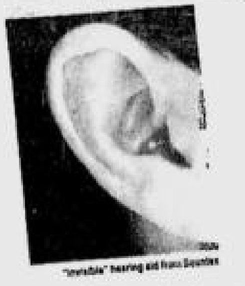
Schneider said he had been approached by a man urporting to be working for Porteous' lawyer, Marn Bennett, who phoned him to suggest he change is evidence.

He said the man had told him: "We can discuss he issue of changing your statement."

Schneider said he rejected the offer of discussing ayment over coffee and declined to change his tatement

AFP

PORTEOUS: Merry widow?



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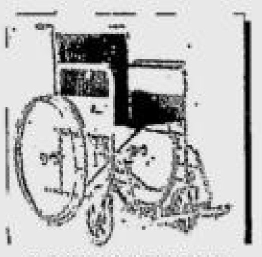

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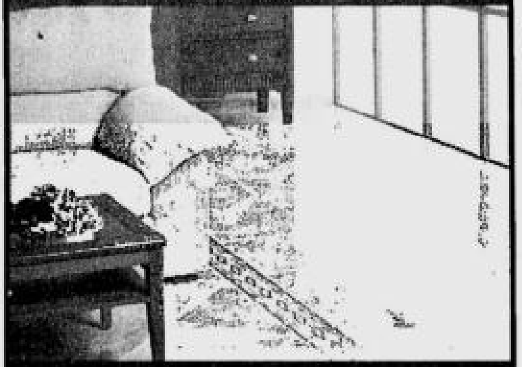

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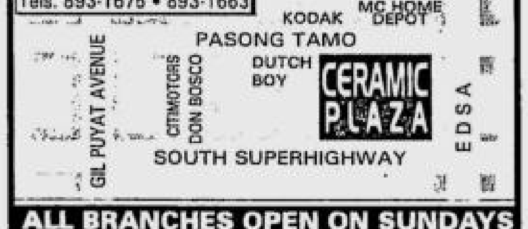

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OPINION

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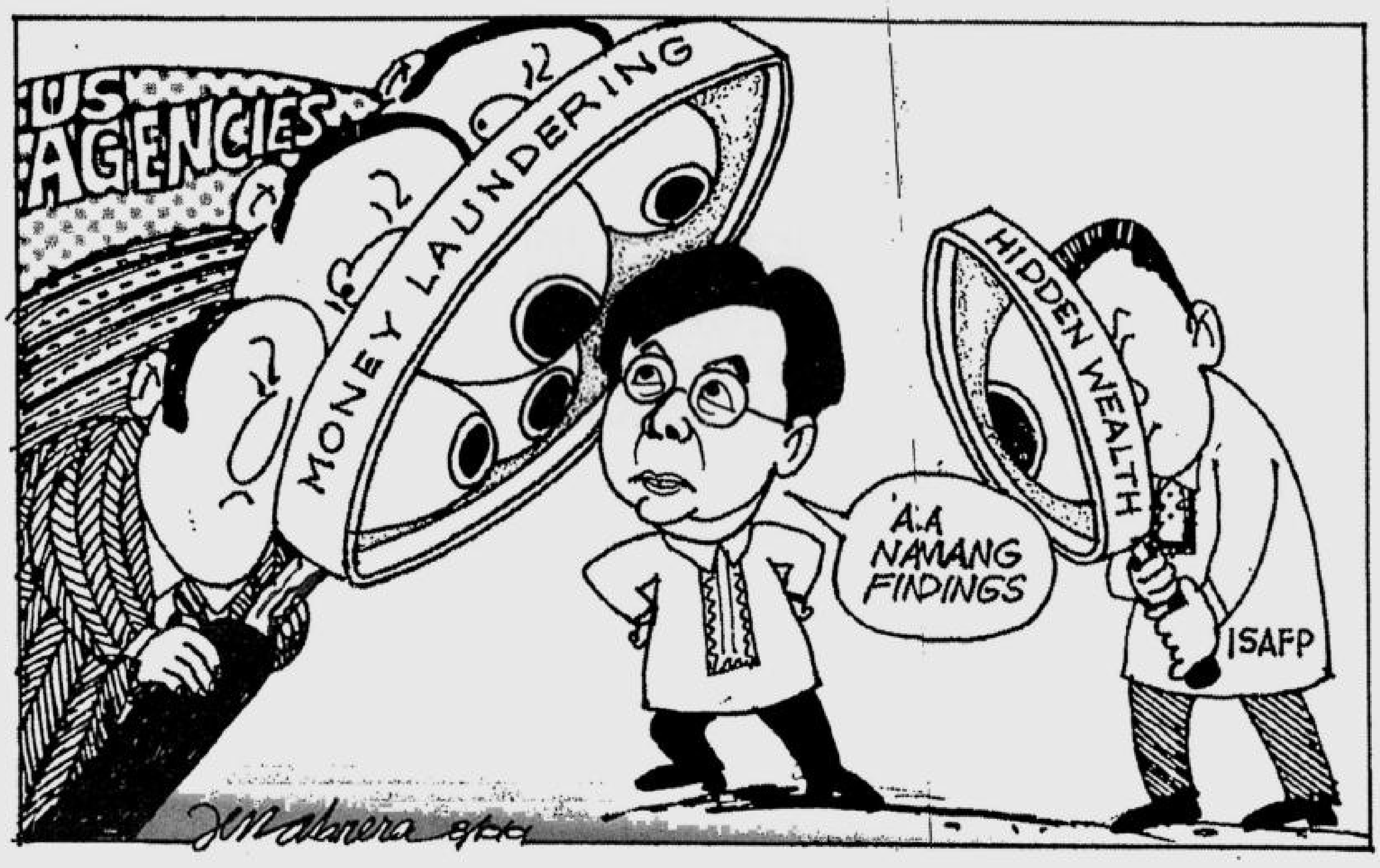


Treason

EDITORIAL

THEY had the enemy in the sights of their rifles. Better still, the troops had the Abu Sayyaf bandits pinned down in a small area in Lamitan, Basilan. In fact, President Gloria Macapagal-Arroyo could already smell victory even from far off Manila. We have the bandits cornered, she told a nationwide television audience, and we will soon wipe them out. All it will take is one more bullet.

That was Saturday night, June 2. But when dawn broke the following day, the Abu Sayyaf had vanished into the forest, together with 14 of the 20 hostages they had taken eight days earlier from the Dos Palmas Resort in Palawan and five new ones. Five hostages were said to have dashed to freedom, but two were killed.

How did government forces bungle their one best shot at freeing the hostages and delivering a crippling, if not a mortal, blow to the Abu Sayyaf? The bandits made their escape under cover of darkness, said the military spokesperson, and when the troops noticed it, they had to hold their fire lest they hurt the hostages and children whom the Abu Sayyaf were using as human shields.

But there were other explanations and other versions of what happened that Sunday morning. An unidentified Marine officer was quoted as saying there was apparently "a breakdown of communication" which allowed the bandits to flee through the back of the compound. "We thought it was sealed off," he said. Lamitan residents observed that the troops left the back of the church and hospital unguarded.

Despite the great embarrassment that this shameful episode brought down upon the Armed Forces and their commander in chief, the top brass were apparently ready to write it off as a case of bad judgment, serious miscalculation or at worst, gross incompetence. A few days later, Col. Jovenal Narcise, commander of the ground forces fighting the Abu Sayyaf, was relieved of his post and grounded in Zamboanga City. Then his immediate superior, Brig. Gen. Rome Dominguez, chief of the 1st Infantry Division, was reassigned to the 8th Infantry Division.

The relief and reassignment of these military officers, however, didn't stop people from talking and asking questions. And one question that has been begging for a credible answer is why Reghis Romero II, a wealthy property developer, and his girlfriend were the first to "escape" from the Abu Sayyaf. Romero was their prize catch, and it really looked very strange that they would be so lax that he managed to escape. That set off talks of payoffs—and not only to the Abu Sayyaf but to their military pursuers as well.

As the crisis dragged on, talk about ransom and payoffs persisted. One had it that Romero's ransom payment of P10 million was split down the middle: one half for his abductors, the other half for some military officers who paved the way for his escape. A new book written by Jose Torres Jr. recounts an incident where a general, after meeting with the family of a hostage, arrived at the hospital in Lamitan and met with a colonel. Then in full view of the hospital staff, he opened an attaché case containing bundles of P1,000 bills and proceeded to give the nurses some money for their snacks. That same afternoon, the troops assigned to guard the back of the hospital were ordered to pull out. Later that night the Abu Sayyaf and their hostages started to move out of the compound.

Fiction? Sen. Ramon Magsaysay, chair of the Senate committee on national defense, has said he has information that an "unholy alliance" exists between the Abu Sayyaf and some military officers. Now, Fr. Cirilo Nacorda, the parish priest of Lamitan, has come forward to accuse some top military officers of being in cahoots with the bandits. "We no longer suspect, we believe there was (military) connivance" in the escape of the bandits, Nacorda said. Then he went on to identify Dominguez and Narcise as the general and the colonel mentioned in Torres' book.

Of course, Dominguez denies everything. Nacorda must still be suffering the trauma of being captured twice by the Abu Sayyaf, he says. But he is taking legal action against the priest for destroying his name, his career and the reputation of his family.

Nacorda is unfazed by the general's threat. "We have strong and hard evidence," he said. "I am collecting sworn statements to prove this."

That is what the military should have done in the face of all this talk about payoffs and devilish deals with the enemy: investigate and get the testimony of witnesses. It is difficult to imagine a more serious crime than this in the military service. This is a betrayal of a soldier's oath, a sellout of the troops. In a word, this is treason.

Dominguez is right: Anyone who does this deserves to be shot. But first, will the AFP please convene a court-martial?

Bacolod mural by world-class Filipino artist is deteriorating

AS I SEE IT

Neal H. Cruz

WHILE the mural by National Artist Vicente Manansala at the National Press Club is in danger of being lost to its employees, another outstanding mural by another outstanding Filipino artist is in danger of being lost due to neglect.

The world-class mural by Filipino-American Alfonso Ossorio, a close associate of Jackson Pollock, in the Victorias Sugar Mill church in Bacolod, Negros Occidental, is fast deteriorating because of neglect.

Many Filipinos may not have heard of Alfonso Ossorio before but he is a giant in modern art. He was a fellow painter and very close friend of Pollock. Without Ossorio's support, there might never have been a Jackson Pollock now.

In fact, Ossorio was one of the first friends and visitors of Pollock and his wife Lee Krassner in their rented house in New York. In their book on Jackson Pollock, Steven Naifeh and Gregory White Smith wrote that "among the very first guests was a wealthy young (Filipino) collector and artist, Alfonso Ossorio, who came with his companion, Ted Dragon (a ballet dancer)...." Ossorio and Dragon continued to see the Pollocks two or three times a week, often bringing big boxes of food and other gifts, mistaking the Pollocks' Spartan country lifestyle for genuine poverty. Lee accepted such handouts gratefully and even encouraged the impression—no longer accurate—that she and Jackson were living on the financial edge. Ossorio was also welcome in Jackson's studio, where his admiration for artists and his patrician bearing combined in a ritual of flattery.

"'When Alfonso came to look at your paintings,' recalls another artist's wife, 'he did it with such grace and style. Instead of coming in like a shopper and just looking for something to buy, he made you feel like he was a patron who considered it a privilege to acquire one of your paintings.'

"Jackson expressed his gratitude by taking the newcomers exploring the beaches and, occasionally, spending an evening at the Helmuth house. Shy and tranquilized, he made a poor guest. 'He would say maybe three words the whole evening,' Ted Dragon remembers. 'He would sit there like a mummy the whole time.' More enjoyable were the weekly trips, Ossorio's treat to the movie house in East Hampton, where Jackson 'loved the westerns and science fiction,' Dragon recalls."

It was Ossorio, who had some experience in buying and selling works of art abroad, who helped Jackson mount his first show in Paris. It was also Ossorio who provided the $1,000 needed to make a model of a museum that Jackson was planning to build.

Ossorio's Bacolod mural was mentioned in the Naifeh-Smith book. "Ossorio had gone to the Philippines to paint a mural for a chapel his family was erecting and, in a gracious gesture, offered the house to the Pollocks for the winter. Ted Dragon stayed behind, but spent most of every day rehearsing for his debut in Stravinsky's 'Orpheus' with George Balanchine of the New York City Ballet."

It was Ossorio who initiated and encouraged Jackson into painting murals. According to Naifeh-Smith, "it wasn't until Ossorio returned from the Philippines in May that Smith found the opening he was waiting for. Having spent the winter with his devoutly Roman Catholic family, Ossorio found the return to secular New York unusually wrenching. At a dinner party hosted by Gerald Sykes and Buffie Johnson, his indignation boiled over. 'Can you imagine,' he shouted, pounding the table, 'there isn't a single private chapel in all the Hamptons! Not one!' The outburst led to a meeting with Tony Smith, another devout Catholic, at which Ossorio commissioned a design for a private chapel to be built 'somewhere on Long Island.' Smith urged that Jackson be commissioned to paint murals for the project, and Ossorio, who was always eager to help the Pollocks, enthusiastically agreed.

"'I was very excited by the enormous possibilities inherent in mural decoration,' Ossorio recalls, 'and I knew it was one of Jackson's interests, too.' For the time being, no one talked about siting or costing or sponsorship. 'It was not a specific building for a specific spot,' says Ossorio, 'it was a symbolic idea that could be produced very simply or very grandly. It was a kernel, an acorn, from which trees would grow.'"

That Ossorio mural, now deteriorating and being neglected, not only is a work of art but is part of the history of modern art. Filipinos, especially the Bacolod folk, should be proud of it. They and the Commission for Culture and the Arts, the National Museum, the National Historical Institute and art lovers should do something to save and preserve it.

* * *

TODAY'S joke: The reference to hell by Sen. Panfilo Lacson several times in his speech reminded me of this joke on what hell is like.

A sinner died and went straight to hell. He found the place full of beautiful women, all naked and willing.

"Well, hell is not so bad, after all," he said. "No wonder there are so many sinners."

He grabbed the first nude woman who glided by and embraced her and kissed her. She didn't resist. But when he tried to make love to her, he found out she did not have any sex organ. So he grabbed the next female and tried to make love to her, too. He found out she had the same defect as the first one. After trying to make it with several other women who also had the same defects, he turned to a glum-looking man sitting dejectedly nearby.

"What is this?" he exclaimed, "all these beautiful women have no sex organs."

Replied the man: "That's the hell of it."

Vigilance

THERE'S THE RUB

Conrado de Quiros

I STILL get a lot of letters from abroad and from local readers about the bad news that keeps coming out of our media. Indeed, I hear a lot of comments about it in gatherings from friends and strangers. Media, they say, have become little more than scandal sheets, raking up mud all over the place. Television especially, which tends to dwell on the rape and pillage, literal and metaphorical, in and of this country.

Media, in fact, the letters and comments say, are not being part of the solution, they are part of the problem. They're not just scaring off potential tourists and foreign investors, they're scaring off everybody else, chief of them Filipinos abroad. Why can't media feature some good news too? Why can't they show the good side of the country too?

These criticisms are not without merit. I know where some of them are coming from. I've talked to reasonable Filipinos in the United States who lament this turn of events in Philippine media. A great deal of it, they say, is plain sensationalism, or exploiting sex and violence for profit. Never mind the Filipino image, although it also hurts that one is thought to come from a country of thieves, rapists and murderers. But this unrelenting spate of bad news, they say, is also discouraging the Filipino community abroad, many of whose members truly want to do something for the home country.

They're probably right about the exploiting of sex and violence, though I understand that there's something far more profitable than those tried and tested staples these days. Which is the occult. Your tabloid has a headline about people sighting *aswangs* and UFOs, and you are guaranteed a huge circulation that day. The NGOs, quite incidentally, lodge the same complaint. Surely, they say, what they are doing merits some space in the newspapers, television and radio and not just the *saksakan* and *barilan* in street corners?

I sympathize with them, but I must also hasten to say that there is bad news and bad news, there are negative stories and negative stories, there are criticisms and criticisms. If the bad news is just about sex and violence, then by all means let us curb it. But if the bad news is about corruption or government embracing patronage politics or taking an anti-poor stance, then by all means let us have more of them. Or at least let us have more exposés of them. That kind of bad news or negative story or criticism we can never have a surfeit of. It is what guarantees the health of democracy.

I remember that during the early part of the Erap administration, people kept telling me to give criticizing Erap a rest. Many of them were very good friends of mine. At the very least, they said, it didn't make good strategy to be so critical of someone who was very popular. Even if I were right, I would only succeed in alienating myself. At the very most, they said, Erap was just new in the game. He had just become president, so why shouldn't everyone, including columnists, give him a chance to succeed?

This was less than a year after Erap was voted into power, a period that saw him variously trying to bury Marcos in the Libingan ng mga Bayani, restoring Lucio Tan, Danding Cojuangco and the other Marcos cronies to their former stations in life, and surrounding himself with gangsters who would later become the so-called "midnight cabinet." I was all for giving new presidents a chance to succeed, I said. Indeed, I was all for helping him succeed, I said. But succeed in what? That, I said, I would like to be very clear about.

I am glad the NGOs at the time refused to surrender to the spirit of bonhomie and back-patting and insisted on telling the bad news about the Erap administration where they saw bad news. If they hadn't done that, Marcos would now be ensconced in Valhalla, or our equivalent of it, Tan would still be oppressing airline passengers and PAL workers (though he still is, as the Freedom to Fly Coalition and the PAL unions say), and Erap would still be president. Edsa II did not begin only with Chavit Singson's revelations, any more than Edsa I began only with Ninoy Aquino's murder. It began long before, in the vigilance of the NGOs who did the lonely and thankless job of pricking the national conscience when it seemed suicide to do so.

There is a bane worse than our propensity to see the worst in ourselves, and that is our propensity to close our eyes to the worst in ourselves. There is a bane worse than our propensity to lapse into cynicism, and that is our tendency to lapse into smugness. The second was what happened after the first Edsa. Everyone was suddenly swept in the flood of euphoria, it seemed almost treason to see that brain-eating cultists were roaming the countryside, the colonels who tortured prisoners were being promoted, Cory Aquino's *kamaganaks* were flocking like vultures around the carcasses of government corporations. To raise a dissenting voice was to be called negativistic—no, it was to be called communistic. To say that the emperor wore no clothes was to be called churlish and lacking in *pakikisama*.

Every time I hear people say we must stop dwelling on the bad and start seeing the good, this is what I see too, the promise of Edsa thwarted. I most certainly believe in seeing the good, though I have a quite different view of what is good and heroic and creative from that of other people. I see goodness and heroism and creativity in kids being able to make *bangkang papel* and turn mountains of garbage into mountains of gold and not in a president thinking she has the power to make their dreams come true. But I believe even more in the need to see the bad where there is bad, and expose it before it turns into a rot, before its stench rises more powerfully to the heavens than the garbage at Payatas.

Who knows? Maybe if we had done that with ferocious zeal at Edsa I, we might never have needed to mount an Edsa II. Who knows? Maybe if we just toiled every day to make sure the right thing gets done, we won't need to take superhuman effort one day to make sure the wrong thing we've allowed to grow is cut down.

Edsa is the price of freedom from one end. But it is also the price of complacency on the other.

The things that set Lacson and Corpus apart

ANALYSIS

Amando Doronila

SEN. Panfilo Lacson, Philippine Military Academy Class '71, and Col. Victor Corpus (Class '67) have clashed head-on in the intelligence-police report alleging money laundering by Lacson. Their paths crossed at the Senate after traveling from two different perspectives.

No two Philippine Military Academy alumni can have a more contrasting career and ideological paths than Lacson and Corpus. While Lacson carved his career mainly in the defunct Philippine Constabulary and its successor, the Philippine National Police, Corpus cut his spurs and defined his career mainly in the Army. Both services are rival institutions, springing from the intra-services cleavage prior to the separation of the PC from the Armed Forces and its replacement by the PNP.

Lacson's mentality is that of a policeman; that of Corpus, an army man whose functions can range from combat duties to military intelligence and even to tree-planting, although there's something unique about Corpus—his career had an interlude marked by being a social rebel fighting on the side of the New People's Army.

A false issue has emerged from the report of the PNP and the Intelligence Service of the Armed Forces of the Philippines (Isafp) alleging fabulous money deposits by Lacson in banks in the United States, Canada and Hong Kong. The issue is that money laundering is a police concern, so some senators are asking why the military has taken a lead role in tracing the paper trail of the alleged Lacson hoard.

The issue is false because laundering is not merely a case of hiding great wealth overseas but because it is being linked to drug trafficking. The implication is that drug trafficking is not only a big source of dirty revenue but is also the base of organized crime activities implicating key police officials. This is why the white paper is not a limited police problem, that should be placed solely under the jurisdiction of the PNP; it has national security implications. The Army should theoretically concern itself with external aggression, but in reality, the Army has been a key element in fighting internal insurgencies and organized crimes, assisting the police.

The investigation by the Isafp, therefore, of the alleged Lacson money laundering and its link to organized crime falls within the scope of the military's function as guardian of the national security.

Lacson has tried to shift the focus from money laundering to side issues that call attention to the unconventional career background of Corpus even as new evidence has been revealed about the US government's investigation of large money transfers.

As a rebel army lieutenant who bolted the military service after leading a raid on the PMA armory with the NPA, Corpus is accused of having killed soldiers in encounters between government troops and NPA rebels. This issue, of course, has little to do with whether there is factual basis and truth to the money laundering allegations.

The casualties in these encounters are the consequence of war. Combatants have to kill one another—that's the code of war. This fact cannot therefore be used to answer charges that Lacson has allegedly killed or tortured people in pursuit of the line of duty as member of the now defunct but notorious Metrocom Intelligence and Security Group (MISG) of the PC during the Marcos martial law years and of the Presidential Anti-Crime Commission of the Ramos years.

In his book, "Closer than Brothers," Al McCoy wrote that officers in this elite unit "were the embodiment of an otherwise invisible terror." As Marcos' favored instrument, the book, quoting a report from a Manila magazine, "produced some of the most fearsome and brutal cops in memory." Its commander for 12 years, the book says, Col. Rolando Abadilla (PMA '65) "towered over other heavies in that closed, tight-knit, psychotic club of martial law enforcers—next only to Gen. (Fabian) Ver…in the dictator's trust and confidence."

This is the context with which to relate Lacson's record as chief of then Vice President Joseph Estrada's PACC whose war on crime has produced such controversial cases as the Kuratong Baleleng massacre.

Lacson himself has admitted in a "Playtime" interview with the INQUIRER's Lifestyle staff that he had lost track of the number of people he had killed in the line of duty. Lacson justified this by saying that, "You have to protect yourself, you have to defend yourself."

Lacson makes no secret of people he admires most and his role models are authoritarians like Marcos, Lee Kuan Yew and Pakistan's strongman, Gen. Pervez Musharraf, who now is the country's military dictator. Lacson believes that the country's interests are higher than individual rights. He says that "there are situations that would call for the Machiavellian style of leadership." He says that "because it is good for the country, it is good for the people, then we can apply that." The trouble is that it's Lacson who determines what's good for the country and the people.

This statement is a giveaway of the authoritarian mentality of Lacson and makes people wonder whether the mentality has translated into the Kuratong Baleleng massacre, the Dacer murder and the Bentain murder.

The difference between Lacson's interpretation of the line of duty is that its victims, especially those tortured, were defenseless people, and Corpus' involvement in encounters in which government soldiers were killed sprang from open combat.

Although Corpus' career fluctuated between the narrow band of insurgency as a social rebel and military service, there is in it a strong element of social renovation. Corpus broke away from the military after a brief service as a PC officer in Cavite, where the interference of political warlords and political corruption hampered fair law enforcement and shattered the idealism of young PMA graduates.

These two officers now clashing in the Senate inquiry have nerves steeled by their respective perspectives and experiences. They are symbols of two irreconcilable traditions—one soaked in terror and the other in social reformism.

Parenting a gay child

AT LARGE

Rina Jimenez-David

GUESTING in tomorrow's episode of "XYZone," a radio show devoted to issues and concerns of women aired over dzAR "Angel Radyo," 1026 AM, is Josee Rothuizen, a consultant on gay and lesbian health issues who works as a counselor with the Schorer Foundation in the Netherlands.

Rothuizen visited the country to run a workshop on counseling for gays and lesbians at the recent Asia-Pacific Conference of Ilga, the International Lesbian and Gay Association. The conference, held in Cebu, was in preparation for the Ilga International Assembly, which will be held in the Philippines next year, the first time it will be hosted by an Asian country.

As Rothuizen pointed out, only in the Philippines among other countries in Asia could an international assembly of gays and lesbians (as well as transgenders and transsexuals) be held without courting government repression or social opprobrium. In discussions with delegates from other Asia-Pacific countries who attended the Cebu conference, Josee found out that "it can be very dangerous to publicly declare yourself a gay man or a lesbian." Sanctions range from imprisonment, as in China, to familial and social ostracism and even violence, especially in predominantly Muslim societies.

Other countries, and this includes the Philippines, I think, "tolerate" gays but only if they appear and behave in a "socially acceptable" manner, says Josee. In Thailand, she says, the populace is quite tolerant of transvestites in the entertainment industry, "but only if they keep to their place." Lesbians, she says, are far less tolerated and can be seen as downright threatening, especially "butch" or masculine-looking lesbians.

* * *

GAYS and lesbians face much the same health concerns as straight men and women. But as a counselor, she says, she finds herself having to deal much more with issues of loneliness, self-rejection and isolation. "Even in Europe, where gays and lesbians are much freer to express themselves, they find themselves having to deal with the rejection of their families and being seen as 'outsiders' by the rest of society."

The Schorer Foundation, says Josee, runs a telephone counseling hotline and she has received calls from concerned parents who want to know if their son or daughter, who shows signs of being gay or lesbian, can be "cured" of his or her sexual orientation.

"I tell them that I can help them deal with their child's emerging sexual preference, but that it would be harmful in the long run to repress or subsume something that is natural in the child," shares Josee.

Josee advises parents to abandon any anxiety or guilt they might have about having "raised" a gay son or lesbian daughter. For many people, she adds, sexual preference is a matter of genetics, they are born gay or lesbian. There is nothing parents can do about it.

But parents can do something about the way they choose to accept or reject a son or daughter who turns out to be gay or lesbian or bi-sexual. My own thoughts on this is that a parent's role is to nurture a child's sense of self and self-esteem, to bring out the best in that child and impart values and beliefs to him or her so that he or she grows into a productive, mature and loving adult. But if, out of homophobia, parents end up making a gay son's or lesbian daughter's life miserable, thereby hampering the child's journey to maturity, then they would have been failures.

* * *

IN THE FAMOUS Kinsey study of sexuality, Josee notes, only around 10 percent of the subjects were found to be "100 percent heterosexual" while around 10 percent, too were found to be "exclusively homosexual." The majority tend to fall in between, attracted to people of both sexes, but to varying degrees. So it may also be possible, she said, that a man may be just as sexually attracted to other men as to women, but choose to have sexual relations only with women.

It is also entirely possible, she adds, for a man who used to lead a gay lifestyle and even had a relationship with another man, to then decide to have an exclusively heterosexual relationship. But Josee warns that "giving up a sexual orientation is not always that easy," for repressing one's "gay" or "lesbian" side comes at a price. "It's like someone who's an artist at heart being forced to give up painting for a career in, say, banking," she says. A sense of regret might linger, or spiral into depression or manifest in self-destructive behavior.

But it is not primarily sexual relationships (or lack thereof) that prove the most contentious to gay men and lesbians she has counseled, recalls Josee. Most of her clients, she says, are actually searching for some "significant other," for a partner with whom they can share common interests and aspirations, and count on for long-term support and affirmation. Which is, come to think of it, what everyone—straight, gay, lesbian or whatever—is searching for.

* * *

DOES a supportive political, legal and social environment help gays and lesbians cope better with their personal and emotional problems?

"Certainly it does," says Josee, adding that laws that enable gay and lesbian couples to marry or legally adopt give them a sense of validation and "legitimacy," make them feel like they truly belong to society, rather than merely occupy its fringes.

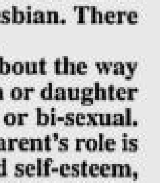
"A legal marriage is very important for a gay or lesbian couple in a long-term relationship," asserts Josee. "For if they are not married, if one of the partners gets sick, in many hospitals in Europe, the healthy partner, no matter how long they have been together, will not have any right to be informed or consulted on treatment options or approaches. Only family members are recognized."

It is hard enough finding someone with whom one can bind heart, mind, body and soul. How cruel, indeed, it would be if those bonds, stronger than death, could not survive bureaucracy and small-mindedness.

Filmmakers and historians

LOOKING BACK

Ambeth R. Ocampo



NOW that the heat is on Sen. Panfilo Lacson, I wish one of the TV stations would run again that B-movie on his life. As a historian it is fascinating to see how "reel life" and real life converge in a movie about living personalities. I remember when a producer approached then Manila Mayor Fred Lim for yet another biopic and he reacted so quickly saying, "*Ayoko ng* special effects!" I presumed he objected to the kissing and bed scenes that add spice and heat to the film, until I was told by his aides that he was not pleased with the action scenes that had him tumbling on the dirt evading bullets from hoodlums firing automatic weapons. Heroes in movies have to be heroic, even if they happen to be criminals in real life like Nardong Putik and other bandits played by Ramon Revilla Sr. I want to view the Ping Lacson film if only to prove to myself that filmmakers face the same challenges as a professional historian when dealing with a character from real life. Research is required and a lot of analysis to sift the real from the "reel" life, then the story has to be told.

I would think it is harder to make a movie about a living person than it is to do one on heroes long dead like Jose Rizal, Andres Bonifacio or Emilio Aguinaldo. Heroes are superhuman, they are always white compared to the black *contrabidas*. There is very little gray area in a film. Then, there is the added bonus that a character can change little because he is long gone unlike someone like Sen. Gregorio Honasan who cannot be judged by history—or a film—just yet because in one lifetime he has gone up and down in the eyes of people depending on particular phases in his colorful life. How do you treat him as a Marcos-era soldier, as hero of Edsa 1986, as leader of failed coups against the Aquino administration, as senator of the realm? Here you have one man who is hero or a villain depending on how you look at him and when. This is one example when you can throw a life to the winds of the future and say, let history decide.

These reflections are the result of my rereading sources on the Philippine Revolution and the Filipino-American War for a graduate course I am teaching at the Far Eastern University. Our class discussions have been quite animated and helped me rethink many things I thought I knew about this period. While discussing the merits of a primary source (meaning a narrative by an eyewitness or participant in a historical event) contrasted to a secondary source (a narrative by a historian who did not live in the time or was not a participant in the event), one student focused our attention on the memoirs of Aguinaldo entitled, "Mga Gunita ng Himagsikan (Memoirs of the Revolution)." In one part of this book, Aguinaldo describes a massive trench they built in Cavite measuring 600 meters in length, six meters wide, four meters high and three meters thick. This was hard enough for me to imagine, but that was not the extraordinary part, Aguinaldo writes:

"This [trench] also served as a recreational spot for me. Sometimes, especially when we did not have gunpowder anymore, I would walk akimbo on top of a wall. Upon seeing me, the enemy would begin shelling. Since I could see the coming of the shells, I could very well avoid being hit. At times, the shells would fall on the ground near me, and I would be covered with mud much to the delight of the children who were gathering these shells."

When asked how a historian should treat such a remark, I shrugged my shoulders and wriggled out of the situation by saying that is the test of history. This reminded me of another Caviteño, Edilberto Evangelista, the engineer trained in Belgium who was responsible for the professionally built trenches that made the enemy (Spanish and American) marvel. According to Jose Alejandrino's memoirs, "The Price of Freedom":

"…While he was sleeping in a bed…the enemy bombarded the town, succeeding in hitting with a cannon ball the post of the room where he was sleeping, the ball passing scarcely an inch above his body. Far from being alarmed, he merely changed his position in his bed. Urged by his companions to leave , he told them: 'Can you assure me where the next bullet will fall? If not, why trouble myself changing place?'"

I guess Evangelista was one sleepy man, but then Alejandrino gives another example:

"On another occasion, while he was in the beach drawing on the sand with his cane the profile of the trenches which he was planning to construct, another bullet fell very near the place where he was, powdering him with dust and sand. With his proverbial serenity he shook off the dust which covered him and continued dauntlessly with his work."

One does not need filmmakers to invent action scenes with "special effects" for a film on the Philippine Revolution or the Filipino-American War. There is a lot of material in the various memoirs and collected correspondence of the period. It makes entertaining reading. Going back to the B-rate Pinoy action films on the lives of cops and hoodlums, ordinary people become practicing historians by viewing these films and separate "reel" life from real life.

* * *

Comments are welcome at ambeth@admu.edu.ph

The courts and youth offenders

COMMENTARY

Melanie P. Ramos
Institute on Church and Social Issues

VISITING the Manila Youth Reception (MYRC), a detention center for youth offenders at Arroceros Street, I was greeted by its chief, Lily Aunario, with a warm welcome in her small, but cozy office. I called her a few days ago to ask if I could tag along in one of the boys' court hearings to observe the proceedings, as I have never been inside a courtroom to witness a trial. She readily agreed and asked me to visit the center where she'll arrange for somebody to accompany me.

I was escorted to the Manila City Hall (venue of the trial) by one of the MYRC's security staff, together with the two youth offenders whose court hearings were scheduled for the day. Both boys were charged with theft—one for stealing a cell phone and the other for stealing items worth P1,200.

The 17-year-old boy who was charged with stealing a cell phone was accompanied to the court hearing by his parents. His mother, father and nephew went with us to the Manila City Hall and sat beside me during the proceedings. The social worker whom I talked with narrated that the boy's mother would visit the center every day to look after her son's needs. She would stay at the center from 1 to 5 p.m. to talk to her son, wash his clothes and help with the chores at the center. I was touched by the mother's concern for her child and the father's support in attending the court proceedings. The boy may not know or appreciate it, but he is very lucky to have such supportive parents. Many youth offenders languishing in jails and detention centers don't receive visits from their relatives. They suffer not only from their incarceration, but also from their feelings of being unloved and taken for granted. This boy is certainly different because his parents love him despite his failures. If all parents were like these, many children would not have been involved in crimes. The other boy who was with us is only 14 years old. His parents were not able to attend, but he was accompanied by a social worker.

The courtroom was crowded. There were many hearings to be conducted that day and the judge punctually started the session. She started the proceedings but ruled in the end to cancel all hearings for the day due to the failure of the fiscal and the PAO lawyer to attend the session. The judge was visibly irritated by the absence of the two. The people in the courtroom were also angry at the delay. Most of them had been waiting for over an hour and some even came from far places just to attend the hearing. But what could the judge do when the fiscal and the PAO lawyer were not present?

I pitied the two boys who were with us. Their trials were rescheduled for the first week of September. With this, they had no choice but to go back to the detention center and wait for another month until the next court hearing where the fiscal and the PAO lawyer would, we hope, show up.

I went back to the MYRC with a heavy heart. No wonder children languish in jails and detention centers for long periods of time. They have no choice but to wait till the people who are responsible for handling their cases are able to do their jobs. The 17-year-old boy I described above has been in the detention center for six months now. His case drags on due to the failure of his complainant to attend the court trial and the rescheduling of the hearings due to the absence of his lawyer.

There are many children detained in jails and detention centers who stay there unnecessarily. A social worker said that one of the most frustrating cases was that of a young boy who was charged with stealing P2 from another boy. For this, the boy offender was placed in a detention center for weeks where he waited for his case to be tried in court. Imagine, for stealing P2, the child had to undergo rigorous court proceedings and be held at a detention center! The case of this child could have been settled at the level of the community, at most, at the barangay level. It should not have gone as far as the courts.

The Philippine justice system is indeed frustrating. We read about it, we hear about it, probably some of us have experienced undergoing its rigorous processes. The thing is, things will not improve unless all the pillars of the justice system do their part in ensuring that the rights and welfare of children are protected and upheld. The law enforcement, courts, prosecution, correction institutions and the community all have to work together to bring justice to children. Time and again we have heard—the children cannot wait. A day that a child stays at a detention center or jail is a day in his life wasted. A child's place is in school and with his family, where he is showered with the love and support he needs to live a normal and productive life.

WHATEVER HAPPENED TO…?

Abadilla murder case

THE FORMER METROCOM Intelligence and Security Group head during the Marcos regime, Col. Rolando Abadilla, was shot dead in his car while stuck in a traffic jam on Katipunan Avenue in Quezon City on June 13, 1996 by at least four men. (PDI, 6/14/96)

Then Interior Secretary Robert Barbers formed "Task Force Rolly" to immediately solve the crime. The Alex Boncayao Brigade claimed responsibility on June 19, but the task force arrested other suspects. Presented to media on June 24 with the other suspects were Lenido Lumanog, owner of a security agency; Rameses de Jesus, Lumanog's "sidekick"; Cesar Fortuna, a policeman from Cebu who rented a room in Lumanog's house in Fairview; Augusto Santos, also from Fairview; and Joel de Jesus, a tricycle driver.

They were charged with murder at the Quezon City Regional Trial Court Branch 103. During the trial, the suspects said they were tortured to admit to the crime. The torture of one led to the identification of others. A security guard who allegedly witnessed the crime positively identified them as the ones responsible for the killing. The counsel of the accused said his testimony presented contradicting statements as well as inconsistent descriptions of the alleged perpetrators of the crime. Another security guard said the accused were not the killers.

On May 27, 1999, the National Amnesty Commission released a resolution on the supposed plan by the ABB to kill Abadilla. This plan resulted in the mistaken killing of Suseso de Dios outside the La Vista gate.

In a decision promulgated on Aug. 11, 1999, the court, citing the positive identification of a witness, found the accused guilty and sentenced them to death. They moved for a reconsideration, argued the lack of proof beyond reasonable doubt and asked to be allowed to present new evidence. Running priest Robert Reyes offered to present as evidence a wristwatch, supposedly owned by Abadilla, handed over by a member of the ABB.

But the court denied their motions on Jan. 26, 2000. The case was forwarded to the Supreme Court on Feb. 11, 2000 for automatic review. On March 15, 2000 the convicts filed a petition for certiorari with the Supreme Court to question the conviction.

On May 30, 2001, the convicts wrote to Justice Secretary Hernando Perez regarding a complaint of torture they filed with the Department of Justice in 1996. They demanded that the investigation be reassigned from state prosecutor Marilyn Campomanes to a "more diligent" prosecutor for the speedy resolution of the investigation.

Case status: The DOJ transferred the investigation of the torture complaint from Campomanes to a three-member panel it recently formed. But the convicts are still in death row and the Supreme Court has not resolved their petition for certiorari and the automatic review of the case. ***Armin P. Adina, PDI Research Department***

Should we increase the SSS contribution rates?

AS a member of the Social Security System, I take serious attention to the news article titled, "SSS running out of money," published on Aug. 5.

For more than seven years now, I have been remitting my premiums to the SSS so that in the future, I will get the social security protection I need. For a couple of times I have increased my monthly SSS contributions so that the higher the contribution, the higher level of benefits and loan privileges I would be entitled to. Following such, I believe that the SSS should be allowed to do the same—increase its contribution rate so that it can sustain the viability of the members' funds.

In the article, Bukidnon Rep. Juan Miguel Zubiri referred to SSS' financial position as "worsening," citing among others its inability to sustain its benefit payments with that of its collection of contributions. In citing a Commission on Audit report, Zubiri said that the reasons why benefit payments have outpaced remittances in the SSS are: (1) numerous benefit enhancements without the corresponding increase in membership rates; (2) low contribution rate of 8.4 percent; (3) failure to remit members' contributions and; (4) work stoppages.

Throughout the years of my membership in the SSS, I do not recall even a single time when it increased its contribution rate, which remains at 8.4 percent of the salary of the private sector workers. Zubiri said that the shortfall in revenues must be corrected. I believe this should be done. How? By increasing the contribution rate from 8.4 percent to 21 percent as announced by the pension fund in its earlier news releases. Although the SSS has its investment reserve fund to make up for the deficiencies, using it should not always be the case.

From what I learned and gathered, the SSS has increased its benefits and pensions more than 20 times. The last time the SSS increased its contributions was in 1980, at a miniscule 0.4 percent rate. This is a big disparity, considering that the institution has yet to compensate for whatever "financial shortcomings" these benefit and pension enhancements have resulted. I think it will help the SSS a lot if the contribution rate would be higher than the present 8.4 percent, for at least it would somewhat correct the imbalance between collection of contributions and benefit payments.

I am willing to give more for my premiums should the SSS increase its rate of contribution for I am sure I have not only secured for myself a better social security protection, but also helped the SSS funds grow stronger and let the SSS live longer.—**IAN A. BRIONES, 150-D Scout Fernandez St., Diliman, Quezon City**

LETTERS

Unite and work

UNITY is needed to save our country from the economic doldrums. President Gloria Macapagal-Arroyo delivered her State of the Nation Address in Congress. She laid out a road map and many solutions to address major problems besetting our country today. What's remarkable is the chief executive's appeal for a suspension of political bickering to the opposition in the Senate and Congress.

The opposition should stop disseminating discord and dissension in the Sona speech of President Macapagal and instead support the agenda of the President which is still pending in Congress.

These vital bills in the agenda of President Macapagal should not be circumvented in order to cure what ails the country right now.—**JONATHAN R. DY, 17 Chester Babst St., BF Resort Village, Las Piñas City**

LP founded on principle and conviction

WHAT happened to the Liberal Party?

What a foolish question, but it's a question that I must ask of those who consider themselves as true Liberals.

To the great leaders of the Liberal Party, to the founders and to the foot soldiers of this great party, you have left a legacy that will be long remembered by our people.

To those who aspire to serve our country by being a Liberal and lost but were able to maintain their dignity and self-respect, we, the ordinary and forgotten members of this great party, salute you. We hope and pray that someday your principles and convictions will be infused into a new leadership of the party that has given honor and glory to our country.

May we ask what happened to the Liberal Party, which just a few days before the installation of Jose de Venecia, so firmly and categorically said it was solid and strong to fight for the speakership? I think it was only a matter of hours before the party's position was radically changed. It was a total reversal of what it had just stated.

May we, the foot soldiers of this great party, ask the present leadership what benefits or aid, if any, they have received to cause the sudden change? Please enumerate them. Tell us your reasons, so that we may know more about you.

I suggest that you look into the records of the Commission on Elections in the elections for assemblymen in Central Luzon in 1978 to see how very few people belonging to the Liberal Party belied Marcos' claim that "there was no more opposition in Central Luzon."

But you were not like them. You may have your constituencies and yourselves to protect. We have no constituencies to protect but a principle on which our great party, the Liberal Party, was founded. Principle and conviction are the solid foundations of the Liberal Party.

Someday, when our country becomes stable again, perhaps the great Liberal Party will reemerge.—**JESUS I. SANTOS, chair, National Association of Lawyers for Justice and Peace, Suite 0201 Travelers Inn Condominium, Makati Avenue, Makati City**

National security issue not a medical problem

THE UNIVERSITY Belt Consortium published paid statements appealing to all colleges and universities to join it in its so-called "crusade to eradicate a rotting system and excise a cancer that gnaws on the lives of the young and the innocent," Their call is entitled, "The ROTC: Excising a cancer."

This radical call has been followed by individual letters to the editor and even some editorial comments voicing similar sentiments. Lately, there have been walkouts from the Reserve Officers Training Corps training grounds, all calling for the abolition of an institution that has served our country and our people well through several generations and through a world war and several counterinsurgency campaigns.

It is perhaps time that the National ROTC Alumni Association (NARAA) spoke out its mind on this issue. The NARAA, which represents 75 to 80 percent of the Armed Forces of the Philippines, Philippine National Police and Coast Guard officer corps, strongly objects to the abolition of the ROTC program in much the same way as it decries the irresponsible and insulting paid statement of the University Belt Consortium comparing the ROTC to a malignant medical ailment—a cancer no less.

The NARAA states for the record that the relevancy of the ROTC program to our national life is a national security issue and is definitely not a medical problem.

The NARAA would also like to state for the record that we do not and will not condone the brutal ritual of hazing in our educational system to include our military and police training institutions like the Philippine Military Academy, the PAF Flying School and the PNP Academy. The NARAA calls for the swift dealing of justice to the perpetrators of the brutal and dastardly act which caused Mark Chua's death.

The NARAA extols Chua's act of reporting the irregularities in the ROTC system. His idealism is the kind that we should encourage among our youth, especially among ROTC cadets.

The NARAA calls for a wide-ranging review and reformation of the ROTC system with the end in view of strengthening it as a very necessary subset for the infrastructure of our national security. It is the only course in college that directly serves to instill the values of discipline, strength of character, teamwork and patriotism among our youth. School administrators should not default on this shared responsibility with the Department of National Defense, otherwise other really malignant sectors of our society will step in and take over our youth.

The NARAA strongly believes that the ROTC program is still very much relevant in addressing our national security concerns.—**LT. GEN. WILLIAM K. HOTCHKISS III, AFP, (ret.), national chair; CAPT. PANFILO V. VILLARUEL, national president, National ROTC Alumni Association (NARAA) Inc., Camp Gen. Emilio Aguinaldo, Edsa, Quezon City**

IF you have any complaints, grievances or suggestions about the treatment of news and photos by the Inquirer, you may write to the Readers' Advocate, Philippine Daily Inquirer, Chino Roces Avenue, corner Yague and Mascardo Streets, City of Makati or send a fax to Nos. 897-4793, 897-4794, or e-mail readersadvocate@inquirer.com.ph

Writers of letters to the editor are requested to include their complete address and telephone or pager number or e-mail address for verification purposes. The Inquirer will not publish any letter unless such information is supplied.

Harassment via texting, e-mail

THIS is to enlighten your readers on the misconception they may have on the Administrative Disciplinary Rules on Sexual Harassment which was drawn up recently by the Civil Service Commission. Some sectors have misconstrued the rules to mean that the commission has made punishable the sending of jokes with sexual undertones and that in effect, the CSC has likewise curtailed the people's freedom of speech. Allow us to quote the exact provision pertaining to sexual harassment by electronic means, under Section 53 [C] [2] Rule X of the said rules:

"C. The following shall be considered light offenses:

"2. Telling sexist/smutty jokes or sending these through text, electronic mail or other similar means, causing embarrassment or offense and carried out after the offender has been advised they are offensive or embarrassing or, even without such advise, when they are by their nature clearly embarrassing, offensive or vulgar."

Based on the foregoing, sending of jokes of sexual nature or with sexual undertones is not per se punishable. The same only becomes a possible subject of a complaint for sexual harassment by electronic means, in two very specific instances: Firstly, when the telling or sending of sexist or smutty jokes causes the recipient thereof embarrassment or offense, and after the offender has been advised of such ill effects caused upon the recipient; and, secondly, even without such advise referred to above, when the messages sent are by their nature sexually offensive, embarrassing or vulgar.

The first situation is aimed at deterring among others, peer sexual harassment, where telling or sending jokes, of sexual nature or not, is commonplace. The commission recognizes the fact that notwithstanding the usual familiarity between and among friends, jokes may tend to be a subtle weapon used to abuse such closeness or familiarity. Hence, the effective gauge used to classify whether such act is sexual harassment or not is the prior advice given by the recipient to the sender, which serves as warning to the offender that the sexist or smutty jokes told or sent have been causing humiliation or embarrassment. If the jokes continue notwithstanding such fair warning, malice is clearly inferred on the part of the offender. The situation then can no longer be classified as of friendly nature between friends, but strictly, sexual harassment.

The second instance refers to jokes told or sent with no other intention than to cause undue humiliation upon the person of the recipient. They are meant to disgrace and cause dishonor, such that no prior advice upon the offender is needed to exact liability from him/her. The mere telling or sending of messages which are meant to or have immense tendency to degrade the recipient as a person, is punishable. And the warning referred to in the first instance may not be used as a shield to trivialize the harmful effects of this form of sexual harassment upon the person of the complainant.

Furthermore, while we do respect and observe the freedom of speech as enshrined in the Bill of Rights of the 1987 Constitution, be it emphasized that the exercise of one's rights is not without limitation, for otherwise the same may be a tool to oppress rather than to unify. When such right of speech encroaches upon another's right to privacy or personal dignity, then such right must be reasonably regulated. This is where the commission steps in, being the central personnel agency of the government. Above anything else, this is also the underlying reason for the drafting of the rules, i.e. to give redress to the oppressed, to put an end to abuse and to prevent future occurrence thereof.—**KARINA CONSTANTINO-DAVID, chair, Civil Service Commission, Constitution Hills, Batasang Pambansa Complex, 1126 Diliman, Quezon City**

PHILIPPINE NORMAL UNIVERSITY
Taft Avenue, Manila

PNS-PNC-PNU
Centennial
1901-2001

The Board of Regents and the University Community invite the public especially the alumni and former PNS-PNC-PNU officials, faculty and staff to the university's 100th Foundation Anniversary celebration.

Paglilingkod at Pamumuno sa Edukasyong Pangguro

CENTENNIAL PROGRAM OF ACTIVITIES
27 August – 02 September 2001

27 August, Monday
6:00 a.m. Morning Serenade (Diana)
(PNU Lopez Marching Band)
8:00 a.m. Welcome Program for Delegations from Agusan, Lopez, Isabela and Cadiz
9:00 a.m. Unveiling of the Marker for the PNU Teacher Education Museum
Opening of PNS-PNC-PNU Centennial Exhibits
PNU Teacher Education Museum
Opening of Trade Fair
3:00 p.m. PNU Agusan Cultural Showcase
6:00 p.m. PNU Cadiz Cultural Night

28 August, Tuesday
7:30 a.m. Centennial Sportsfest
3:00 p.m. Cadiz Cultural Showcase
6:00 p.m. Isabela Cultural Night

29 August, Wednesday
9:00 a.m. Program for Scholarship Donors
3:00 p.m. Isabela Cultural Showcase
6:00 p.m. Agusan Cultural Night

30 August, Thursday
8:00 a.m. Students' Field Mass Demonstration
10:00 a.m. **Stakeholders' Forum:** "PNU on its Centennial: Contributing to Nation Building Through Teacher Education"
6:00 p.m. "Parting at Calamba", A drama by Severino Montano (National Artist)

31 August, Friday
8:00 a.m. Religious Services
9:30 a.m. Blessing of "Centennial Classrooms
10:00 a.m. Program for Retirees and Service Awards for Faculty & Staff
12:00 n.n. PNUFA/PNUEA Fellowship Lunch
1:00 p.m. Student Activities
- "Palarong Bayan"
- Awarding of SG Centennial Quarters

6:00 p.m. Main Campus Cultural Show

01 September, Saturday
8:00 a.m. Unveiling of Centennial Marker
9:00 a.m. Launching of Coffee Table Book, Festschrift and Other Publications
2:00 p.m. Centennial Convocation
President Gloria Macapagal-Arroyo, Guest of Honor
4:00 p.m. PNU Centennial Grand Raffle (Prize: HONDA City Type Z)
6:00 p.m. - KORONASYON 2001
- *Hari at Reyna*
- *Prinsepe at Prinsesa*
- *Prinsisito at Prinsisita*
- Social Dancing, Dance Contest/ Exhibitions
- Fireworks

02 September, Sunday
6:30 a.m.- **Grand Alumni Homecoming**
- PNU Historical Highlights in Parade
- Registration of Alumni (A fee of P500.00 will be collected to cover dinner, souvenir program and centennial pin)
- Election of PNUAA officers
- Batches/Chapters of Alumni in costumes for field mass demonstration
- PNU students in street dancing attire
- Departments/Colleges, staff units representing specific historical motifs
- Floats for the historical highlights, Jubilarians and Koronasyon 2001 winners

9:00 a.m. - Field Mass Demonstrations
- Alumni Batches /Chapters, Jubilarians will present dances (folk, jazz, cheer), gymnastics, calisthenics, sports mimetics
- Awarding of prizes for outstanding groups

1:00 p.m. Lunch and Class Reunion
- (Each group will have a Key Person who will facilitate the reunion.)
- (Lunch will be taken care of by each group.)
- (Food booths will be available on campus)

3: 00 p.m. • Blessing of Dean Buenaseda Memorial Hall
5:00 p.m. Sunday Mass
- Presiding Priest: Fr. Corsie Legaspi, Class '65 *(Concelebration with other PNU-Alumni priests)*

6:00 p.m.• CENTENNIAL NIGHT (Dinner and Ball)
- Dinner and Socials
- Orchestra Music
- Fireworks

All alumni are requested to contact their Batch Key Persons through

Telefax: 527-0373, 527-0375, 527-0367
E-mail: pnucass@pworld.net.ph

Kunshan City straddles the China-Taiwan divide

NEWS ANALYSIS

Edwin Chan

KUNSHAN—When Taiwan businessman Chi Tao-fu visited the sleepy Chinese town of Kunshan in 1988, he could have been forgiven for wondering what he'd got himself into.

Fresh from go-go Taipei, the portly executive found himself gaping at the squat, dusty buildings that passed for the central business district of the town in Jiangsu province.

The town's two cars jockeyed for space with three-wheeled tractors on rutted dirt paths that passed for roads.

Thirteen years later, Kunshan is a vibrant city of broad boulevards, office blocks and factories, streets crowded with trucks, taxis and private cars—many of them luxury sedans.

This breakneck development has been funded largely by money from Taiwan, China's political arch rival since the end of a bloody civil war won by the communists in 1949.

Taiwan firms have ploughed $60 billion into China over the past decade—a whopping $6 billion of it in Kunshan by the city's estimates.

Taiwan businessmen like Chi have flocked to the mainland by the thousands, the irresistible lure of the world's biggest domestic market blocking out political concerns.

Now, as Taipei leaders lament the exodus of investment to the mainland—some politicians even blame the phenomenon for the economic downturn at home—businessmen continue to head in droves to mainland communities like Kunshan.

"If Taiwan businessmen want to come, you can't stop them. We're here to grab market share—not talk politics," says Chi, the head of Kunshan's Taiwan Investors Associations.

"In fact, you can't lure me away. Things are so good here I never want to go home," Chi, representative for one of Taiwan's largest computer component makers, Hon Hai Precision Industry, adds.

Taiwan businesses are attracted by a pro-investment city government, favorable tax policies and closeness to bustling Shanghai, an hour's drive to the east.

Here, executives find themselves suddenly able to afford the servants, luxury cars and, for some, high-maintenance mistresses they could only dream of at home.

And the town is looking more like Taiwan every day.

Taiwan eateries have sprouted on every street corner, along with karaoke parlors, trendy coffee shops and well-stocked bookstores that thrive on the wallets of the wealthy islanders.

Their children even attend a school built for them last year about half an hour's drive outside town.

"Hardship" allowances and the purchasing power of the Taiwan dollar ensure they have little to complain about.

"Rich people are free everywhere... All kinds of entertainment are available here, though the variety's not too good," says Chen Weihua, who runs Kunshan Taihua Electronics.

The Kunshan story has been repeated elsewhere in China, in Shanghai and the southern cities of Xiamen and Dongguan, although perhaps not on such a dramatic scale.

"Back then, even the smallest village in Taiwan was better than Kunshan," recalls the head of Kunshan's Taiwan Investors Associations. "Now, if teachers were giving out grades for Taiwan and Chinese cities, Kunshan will get a B plus," he adds.

Taiwan executives seeking to unwind after a day's work head for the darkened, smoky karaoke bars strewn across the city, belting out tunes in Hokkien, a dialect spoken on the island.

Unmistakable in their somber business attire, they browse for companions among the skimpily dressed "xiaojie," or hostesses, that bars keep on the payroll. Taiwan businessmen say one in 10 of their number keeps a mistress.

"Mistresses are one of the necessary evils of economic development. We had the same problem in Taiwan a while ago, just not on such a grand scale as here in Kunshan," says Chen, who married a white-collar mainlander.

But it is economic rather than marital affairs that have upset Taiwan's government. China is siphoning away crucial funds as the island's economy suffers—June employment hit a monthly record of 4.51 percent. Beijing's winning bid to host the 2008 Olympic Games may further galvanize fund outflows, analysts say.

Vice President Annette Lu called on businessmen in July to resist the mainland cash "magnet."

"Businessmen have no nationality. They follow the money," says Wen Shi Ming, chair of fabrics firm Fetex. "We can't afford to wait any longer, or else it'd be too late. Every newcomer says one thing: Why didn't I come to China earlier?"

Their Chinese hosts don't mind.

"We welcome all Taiwanese investment. If Taiwan's economy is in a slump, why not come over?" says Wang Xiaodong, assistant director of Kunshan's foreign relations and trade commission.

But all is not smooth sailing. While cultures are similar, Taiwan businessmen quickly find different rules apply in China.

"When Taiwan people talk, maybe they can get their point across in one sitting. But here, it takes maybe two or three meetings," says Jack Lu, who owns Kunshan Project Electronics.

Taiwan expatriates share graver concerns over their ten, like the sporadic crime that targets their moneyed community.

State media reported a recent case of two Taiwan businessmen who had their throats slit and office ransacked in the southern province of Guangdong.

Still, Taiwan entrepreneurs say Kunshan is safe.

"It's just like Taiwan—the convenience, the freedom, the safety," Wen says. "You can go home at 3 a.m., no problem. But in Guangdong, there're murders and robberies all the time." *Reuters*

The WORLD

Luverne B. Gueco, Editor

JAPANESE right wingers stand at attention Aug. 9 as they worship at the Yasakuni Shrine in Tokyo, where Japan's war dead, including World War II leaders convicted as war criminals, are enshrined. Prime Minister Junichiro Koizumi's plan to visit the shrine on Aug. 15, the anniversary of Japan's surrender in WWII, has divided public opinion, upset coalition partners and outraged China and the two Koreas, past victims of Japanese military aggression. REUTERS

Koizumi to decide shortly on plan to see war shrine

TOKYO—Japan's Prime Minister Junichiro Koizumi yesterday said he would decide whether to visit next week a controversial war shrine after meeting leaders of the ruling coalition parties.

"I have been saying that I will visit. But the secretaries general of the ruling parties have been saying that they want me to reconsider," Koizumi told reporters.

"I will meet with them before I make my final decision. I will meet with them soon," he said in Nagasaki, a western port city, which was commemorating the 56th anniversary of its US atomic bombing.

Press reports quoting senior officials of the three coalition parties, dominated by Koizumi's Liberal Democratic Party, suggested the meeting would take place Friday evening.

"I have not decided if I will make my decision at the meeting or if I will take some time after it to reach a final decision," the prime minister added.

Koizumi has vowed to defy opposition and visit the Yasukuni shrine in central Tokyo, dedicated to Japanese war dead, next Wednesday—the anniversary of Japan's World War II surrender in 1945.

Gen. Hideki Tojo and other Japanese war-time leaders, who were convicted as war criminals and hanged by the Allies, are also enshrined at the Shinto site.

Asian countries including China and South Korea have denounced the proposed visit, which they argue would justify Japan's militarist past.

Conservative members of parliament, however, are lobbying Koizumi to stick to his plan to become only the second post-war prime minister to pay homage at the shrine in his official capacity.

In a meeting with Vice Cabinet Secretary Shinzo Abe, former justice minister Okiharu Yasuoka said the Japanese public expected Koizumi to proceed with the visit.

If he cancels the visit, "it may cause irreparable damage to the high hopes invested in the prime minister by the public," Yasuoka told Abe, according to Jiji Press. *AFP*

N. Korea to US: Drop Cold War hostility

SEOUL—North Korea will not resume talks with the United States unless Washington drops its Cold War attitude toward the communist state, a Pyongyang foreign ministry spokesperson has said.

Pyongyang wants the new Bush government to drop its animosity toward North Korea and pick up dialogue from the stage it reached with the previous Clinton administration, the spokesperson said in a news report late Wednesday.

"The resumption of the DPRK-US dialogue will be possible when the present US administration drops its anachronistic mode of thinking that belonged to the Cold War era and its stand is, at least, identical to the stand taken by the Clinton administration in its last period," he said.

"We cannot tolerate the slanderous remarks made by the Bush administration against the DPRK's (North Korea's) supreme headquarters at the time of its emergence," the unidentified spokesperson said, according to the official Korean Central News Agency.

President George W. Bush, who froze talks with North Korea at the start of his presidency in January, has repeatedly said he has "no trust in North Korea and its leader Kim Jong-il."

The North Korean spokesperson added: "We make it clear once again that the DPRK-US dialogue has not yet been resumed entirely because the US side has not cleared the DPRK, the dialogue partner, of its worries."

He said North Korea "can never accept" the agenda items for talks unilaterally raised by the United States "out of its intention to disarm the DPRK and stifle it." *AFP*

WORLDBRIEFS

Nagasaki recalls atomic bombing

TOKYO—Nagasaki yesterday paused to remember the dropping of an atom bomb on the Japanese city 56 years ago in which as many as 70,000 people were killed in the world's second nuclear assault. "The citizens of Nagasaki have continuously struggled to realize a 21st century free from nuclear weapons," Nagasaki Mayor Itcho Ito—an outspoken opponent of weapons of mass destruction—said in a speech. "Nevertheless, no fewer than 30,000 nuclear warheads still exist on our planet, and the nuclear threat is today on the verge of expanding into space." *AP*

India, Pakistan officials set talks

COLOMBO—Top foreign ministry officials from India and Pakistan have scheduled crucial bilateral talks in Colombo this week on the sidelines of a South Asian regional meeting, officials said yesterday. India's foreign secretary Chokila Iyer and her Pakistan counterpart Inamul Haq would meet at the de luxe Taj Samudra hotel at noon Friday, officials said. The officials, from South Asia's nuclear rivals, were expected to carry forward the process of rapprochement which began last month when Indian Prime Minister Atal Behari Vajpayee held a ground-breaking summit with Pakistan President Pervez Musharraf in the Indian town of Agra. *AFP*

Excessive force vs G8 protesters

ROME—Italy's police chief acknowledged for the first time Wednesday that some police units used "excessive" force against demonstrators at last month's Group of Eight summit. He also suggested abuses may have occurred after protesters were in custody. The admissions are likely to fuel accusations of police brutality that have poured in from Europe and elsewhere, embarrassing the new government of Premier Silvio Berlusconi and raising questions about how future summits can be controlled. Police were unable to quell riots during the G-8 meeting that saw the first death of an anti-globalization protester, more than 200 injured and 240 people detained. *AP*

3 bombs explode in Mexico City

MEXICO CITY—Three home-made bombs exploded yesterday night outside banks in Mexico City leaving one person lightly injured, according to police. At two of the sites, the name of a small rebel movement was sprayed on nearby walls. Police said the bombs exploded outside branches of Mexico's Banamex bank, which was recently taken over by US giant Citicorp. One person was lightly injured as windows shattered at the branch in Lomas de Chapultepec, a well-heeled neighborhood that is home to wealthy Mexicans and foreign diplomats. *AFP*

Mideast violence rages on

JERUSALEM—Israeli-Palestinian gunfire echoed through the West Bank and Gaza Strip yesterday after a day of bomb blasts and missile strikes, mangling any prospect for a diplomatic breakthrough to end 10 months of bloodshed.

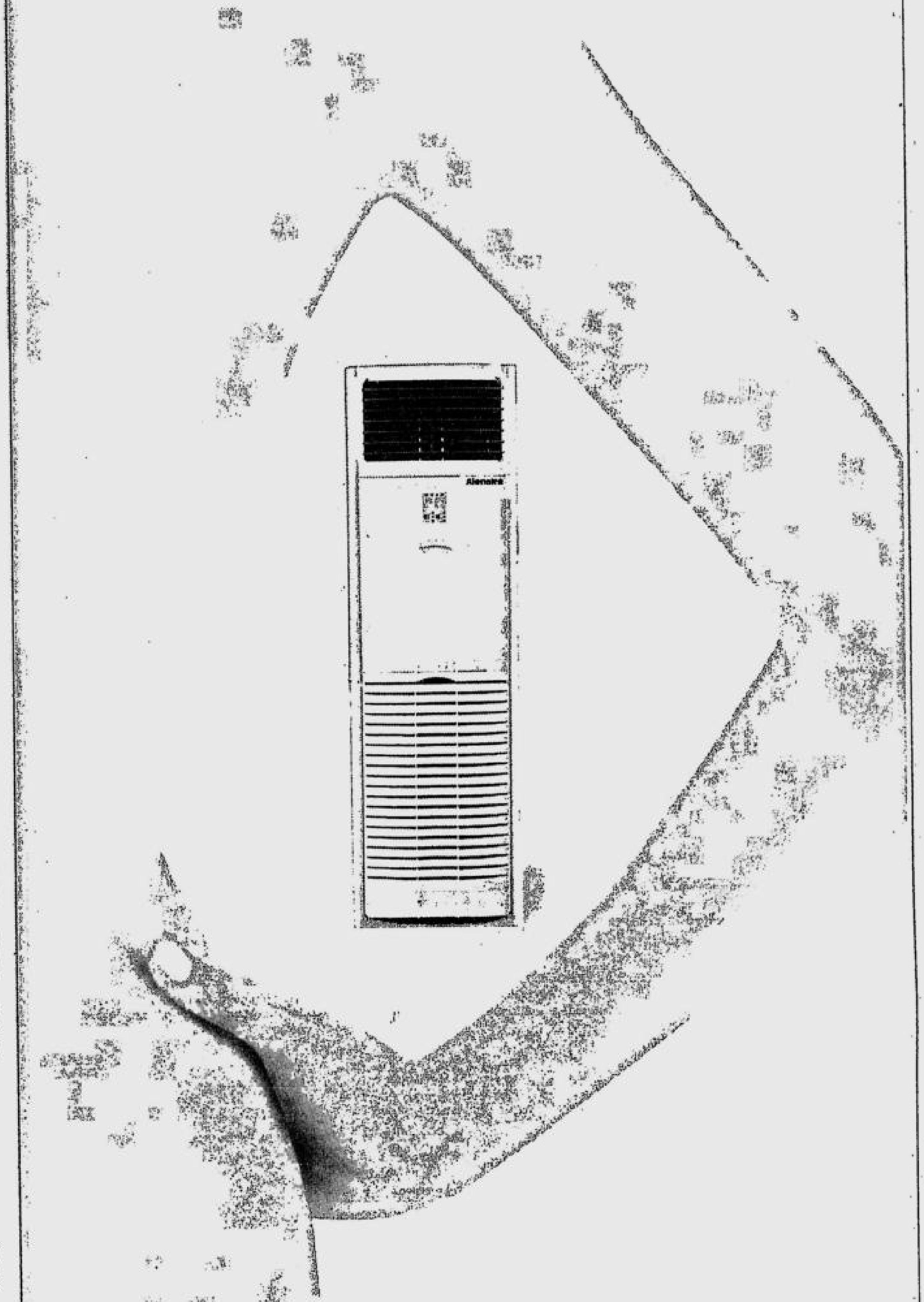
Palestinian gunmen fired on Israeli positions in the West Bank and Gaza Strip late Wednesday, the Army said, after a day of tit-for-tat violence that included two Israeli missile strikes and a Palestinian suicide bombing.

Israeli Foreign Minister Shimon Peres and Defense Minister Binyamin Ben-Eliezer called for high-level talks with Palestinian officials on ending their uprising against Israeli occupation that erupted 10 months ago.

But Israeli Prime Minister Ariel Sharon, on a one-day trip to Turkey, repeated a pledge not to hold peace talks until violence completely ceased and he blasted his Palestinian counterpart, President Yasser Arafat.

"It's important for him to decide if he wants to stand at the head of an independent state and act accordingly or if he wants to stand at the head of a gang of murderers," Sharon said.

Waging a furious war of words, Egypt's foreign minister had days earlier branded Israel's government a "gang of assassins" because of its policy of killing militants it says are plotting attacks against Israel. Israel calls the policy self-defense. *Reuters*



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Megawati forms Cabinet, lauded for picks

JAKARTA—Indonesia's new president yesterday announced her long-awaited Cabinet, winning immediate praise for her choice of a team to pull the country out of years of crisis.

Looking relaxed and confident in the presidential palace that was her childhood home, Megawati Sukarnoputri picked a mostly professional team, although she also handed a number of posts to major political parties and potential foes.

"The economics team is a good choice," Budi Hikmat, an economist with Bahan Securities, said.

The chief economics minister is outgoing ambassador to Washington and respected economist Dorodjatun Kuntoro-Jakti, with former national economic planning chief Boediono as finance minister.

"Dorodjatun and Boediono are the best combination," said prominent economist Sri Mulyani Indrawati.

"Dorodjatun has broad economic skills and is a good coordinator and Boediono is a good scholar and bureaucrat with high integrity. I give Megawati two thumbs up for these choices."

While Megawati handed some posts to key political parties, many of the top positions went to technocrats, a signal that Indonesia may at last have a Cabinet chosen more for its skills than its political affiliations.

She picked widely respected former general Susilo Bambang Yudhoyono as chief political and security minister, a job he was sacked from in the last days of the previous government.

It is one of the most important posts as the world's fourth most populous nation struggles to quell separatist rebellions and communal violence that has killed thousands in recent years.

The former vice-president and daughter of founding president Sukarno came to power nearly three weeks ago when the top legislative assembly sacked Abdurrahman Wahid for incompetence after just 21 months in office.

In her opening remarks, she immediately called on the country's fractious politicians to unite in helping the country recover from four years of economic and political mayhem which has dragged millions back into a life of poverty and violence.

"I realize how difficult the tasks and the responsibilities of the new Cabinet will be. I'm looking for support from all groups," said Megawati, dressed in a blue-grey suit of a style popular among bureaucrats.

The Cabinet also included several old faces, but she postponed naming the vital post of attorney general—whose job will be to try to sort through Indonesia's almost impenetrable legal tangle which is frightening away investors.

Key Megawati aides Kwik Gian Gie and Laksamana Sukardi—both dumped by Wahid—were brought back to the Cabinet.

Kwik, an ethnic-Chinese businessman and economic commentator, was handed national planning while former Citibank executive Sukardi was put in charge of state firms, whose vital privatization has been repeatedly delayed.

The economic team will need to move quickly to get the economy back on track and regain the support of the International Monetary Fund, which has stopped new loans since late last year because of concerns over lagging reforms.

New chief economic minister Dorodjatun told reporters a top priority was to resolve Indonesia's more than $140-billion foreign debt and to get creditors to support economic recovery.

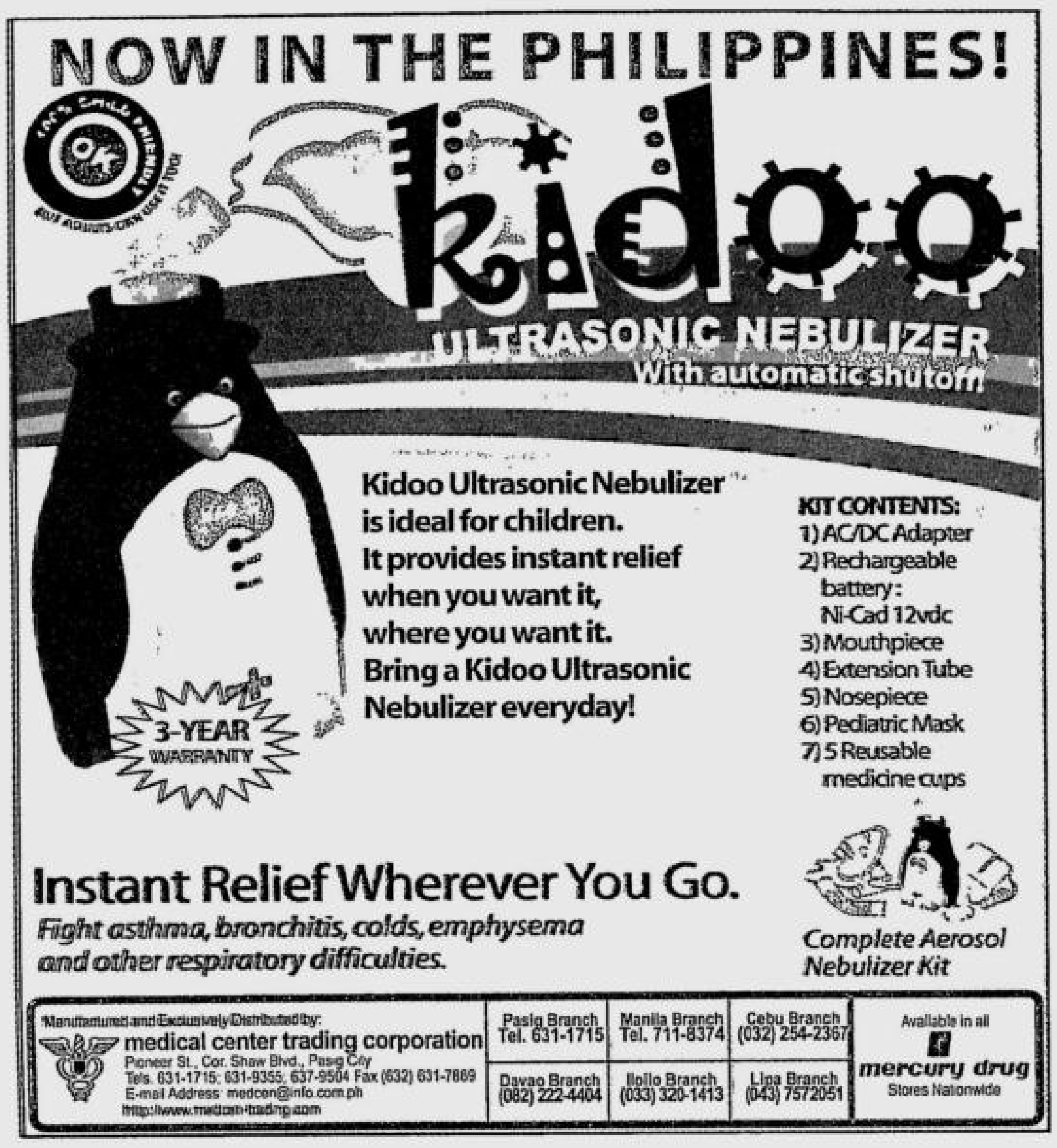
Megawati has made a popular choice in Yudhoyono, who earned widespread respect during his first time in the job.

One of the few surprises was the defense minister, handed to Matori Abdul Djalil, a civilian and former head of Wahid's party.

Djalil turned against Wahid in the final days of his presidency and was sacked from the party post.

"This is indeed a surprise. It's good because he's a civilian . . . but he has very weak knowledge of defense strategy and has no strong network in the military," Riefqi Muna, defense analyst at the Indonesian Science Institute, said. *Reuters*

FOUR of the new Cabinet men appointed by President Megawati Sukarnoputri on Aug. 9 shown in this combination photo: New Chief Political and Security Minister Susilo Bambang Yodhoyono (top left), Chief Economics Minister Dorodjatun Kuntjoro-Jakti (top right), Finance Minister Boediono (bottom left) and Defense Minister Matori Abdul Djalil. REUTERS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IRA ready to begin disarming

LONDON—The Irish Republican Army (IRA) looks set to make a "ground-shifting" move on arms, despite growing pessimism over the future of Northern Ireland's power-sharing government, British media reported yesterday.

Senior republicans told the Guardian newspaper that the IRA was still poised to take its most dramatic step yet—by announcing the start of a process that puts its weapons beyond use.

The IRA is expected to release a statement shortly confirming international decommissioning body chair Gen. John de Chastelain's assessment of arms destruction made earlier this week. On Monday, De Chastelain revealed that the Provisionals had agreed a method for destroying their weapons.

According to the Guardian, the statement will also go a crucial step further by addressing the actual destruction of arms.

High-ranking republican sources told the newspaper they eventually anticipate a declaration by the two international arms inspectors confirming they have witnessed the actual destruction of arms.

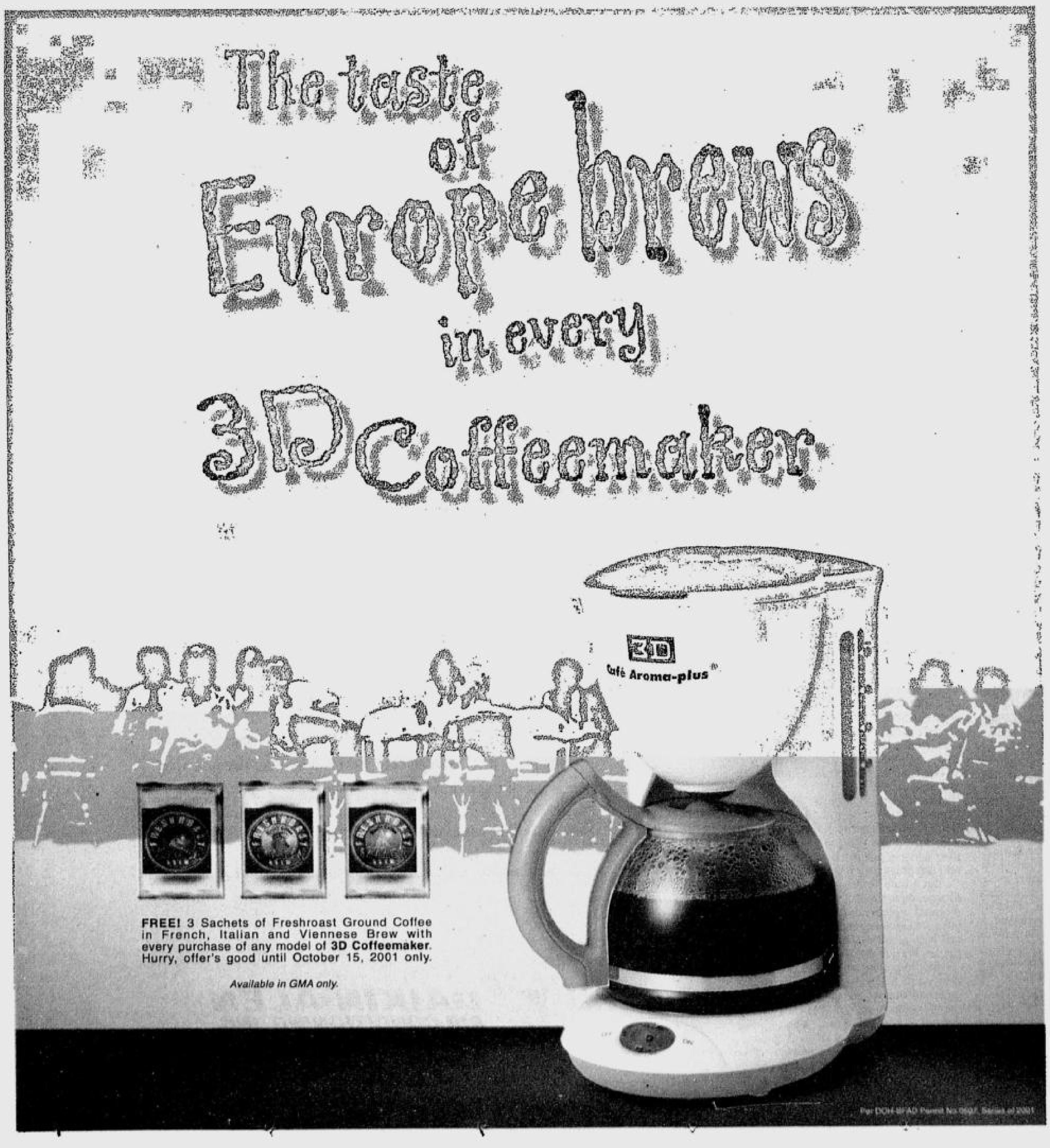
Such a move by the IRA would put immense pressure on Protestant Ulster Unionist leader David Trimble, who has vowed not to return to the job of first minister until the IRA begins to put its weapons out of use.

He sparked the current crisis when he stood down over the issue of IRA arms on July 1.

The power-sharing government, set up under a 1998 peace accord that was meant to end decades of sectarian conflict, is now crippled by controversy over paramilitary disarmament and police reforms.

Republicans have agreed to disarm in return for demilitarization and police reforms.

London and Dublin have produced a plan designed to save the institutions, but it has failed to win the endorsement of any of the main parties. *AFP*



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Damage numbers for 'Code Red' worm overblown

SAN FRANCISCO—Estimates of damage caused by the "Code Red" computer viruses are based on wild speculation and driven by hysteria, according to experts.

"Fear of the Code Red viruses are spreading faster and farther than the actual virus itself," said Rob Rosenberger, a computer security expert who has criticized computer virus warnings as marketing ploys by companies who sell anti-virus products.

According to reports, the Code Red viruses are surging through the Internet, knocking out websites and causing billions of dollars in damage.

However, Internet performance monitoring companies such as Keynote Systems and Opnix are reporting no unusual traffic loads or slowdowns.

"We've seen nothing out of the ordinary," said Mary Lindsay, a Keynote spokesperson.

"There's been no usual traffic loads or outages," said Joanne Szymanski, a spokesperson for Opnix, an Arizona company that runs the Internet Traffic Report, a constantly updating monitor of Internet traffic.

As for Code Red damage reports, experts who write them admit they are based on bogus math and guesswork.

The widely quoted estimate of $2 billion in actual damage from Code Red virus infections came from Michael Erbschloe, chief researcher at Computer Economics, a Carlsbad, California computer security consultancy that sells its services to corporations fearful of virus attacks.

"The press wanted a number on the overall damage, so we put together a number based on estimates, which are just speculations," he said.

The damage estimate was calculated by taking the number of servers infected by the Code Red viruses and multiplying it by five figures, ranging from $300 to $1,350, the estimated cost of having a repair man fix the servers.

The number of servers infected by the Code Red virus, he said, is itself an estimate, supplied by Systems Administration, Networking and Security Institute (SANS), a computer virus think-tank that also sells its computer security services to corporations.

The application of the five figures was done by a ratio determined by industry reports guessing at the range of the complexity of servers running on the Internet. A server is a computer that passes data along on the Internet.

However, the ratio of server infection to total servers on the Internet has one flaw: No one knows how many servers are on the Internet.

SANS researcher Alan Paller said that his company uses only "rough estimates" of the total number of servers. As for servers infected by the Code Red viruses, that varies wildly, from 150,000 to 800,000, according by SANS researchers.

The percentage of this unknown number used to peg Code Red virus infection is also a guess, said Keynote's Lindsay, Opnix's Szymanski and Erbschloe.

"Without a doubt, there are websites and servers being hit with Red Code infections," said Lindsay. "But no one knows how many. And because no one knows how many servers are on the Internet, no one can know what share of the Internet is being damaged by the virus."

One of Erbschloe's more surprising and widely publicized reports said the Code Red virus was on its way to creating some $8 billion in damage, rivaling the losses caused by last year's Love Bug virus.

"That number was pure speculation," admits Erbschloe. "I was asked if the Code Red virus damage could possibly exceed the Love Bug damage. And I said, sure, it's possible. Anything is possible. You can pick any figure at this point." *AFP*

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Across the NATION

TONY BERGONIA, Assistant Editor

Ouster of public works exec sought

BY ALLAN NAWAL
PDI Mindanao Bureau

DAVAO CITY—Contractors of government projects in Southern Mindanao are up in arms against the public works regional director here, accusing him of massive corruption.

In an open letter addressed to President Macapagal-Arroyo, the Mindanao Contractors Against Corruption, Mindanao for Mindanaoans Network and representatives of the militant Bayan Muna demanded that Director Juanito Abergas be relieved, suspended and investigated.

Abergas denied he was involved in the irregularities as transactions in the regional office are transparent.

The contractors said Abergas has received huge cuts out of purchases of construction materials needed in various government projects in the region.

"From 1998, Director Abergas had been systematically diverting millions of pesos intended for infrastructure projects for the purchase of such items as reflectorized pavement markers, bailey panels, guard rails and gabions. The suppliers of these products give away as much as 40 percent of the total purchase cost as commissions or what they call 'S.O.P.s,'" the open letter, which also came out as advertisement in local dailies here, stated.

The contractors said in the case of the Manurigao Bridge in Davao Oriental which was supposed to be repaired at a cost of P23 million, Abergas diverted P16 million to purchase unneeded materials "leaving only P7 million" for the actual repair of the bridge.

The contractors said the gabions used in the bridge were bought for P6,000 per piece, when the prevailing market price is only about P1,800.

They also said Abergas brought his "contractor-friends from Manila to corner the big chunk of the projects in the region."

"The P50 million road project in South Cotabato, (the) P50 million road project in Sarangani and (the) P30 million road project in the Island Garden City of Samal are all undertaken by Manila-based contractors, to the prejudice of local contractors," the contractors said.

They also alleged that Abergas is under protection from ranking public works officials, which is the "saddest part of the story."

Lawyer Abundio Marapao said they have documents to prove the massive corruption in the regional office.

"We are challenging the proper government offices now to act. We could provide the documents they needed to build up the case if they wanted to," Marapao said.

"These are all fabricated lies. Marapao is an irresponsible contractor and he has proven this once more by making false accusations," Abergas said.

He said Marapao was apparently angry at him for failing to win contracts in the region.

"And his being disqualified is not my own doing because every project is submitted for bidding," he said.

Public Works Secretary Simeon Datumanong vowed to place Abergas under investigation.

But he called on the accusers of Abergas to provide documents that could hasten the investigation of the alleged wrongdoings.

"If they can provide me the documents, my investigation will be easier. I will really have (the allegations) looked into. It is for Abergas to answer the allegations," he told the INQUIRER.

But like other public works officials accused of irregularities, Datumanong said Abergas would be given his "day in court."

"When I took over the department, I vowed that I should do some cleaning but it should be made in accordance with existing rules and regulations," he said.

Datumanong also took exception to perceptions here that Abergas is enjoying the protection of top public works officials.

"If there are really top officials who are protecting him, then they should be named and put under investigation, too. As for me, I have no intention of protecting any DPWH employee who is not doing his work," Datumanong said.

As this developed, Datumanong said a reshuffle of public works officials from regional directors to district engineers is under way.

"This came before the allegations against Abergas, but it is one of our moves to make the department an efficient government agency," Datumanong said.

The public works department, according to recent surveys, is one of the most corrupt government agencies.

Bishop backs critics of geothermal plant

BY CARLA P. GOMEZ
PDI Visayas Bureau

BACOLOD CITY—Bacolod Bippppshop Vicente Navarra has declared his support for groups opposed to the entry of the Philippine National Oil Corp. into a 169-hectare buffer zone within the Mt. Kanlaon Natural Park (MKNP).

Navarra said he would issue a circular to be read in all churches on Sunday, to raise the level of consciousness of parishioners on the danger brought by the geothermal power plant to the environment.

He said he was supporting the anti-PNOC rally spearheaded by environment groups at the Bacolod public plaza today.

"We must support the moves to defend the Mt. Kanlaon National Park. We must protect the environment to avert dangers to human life," he said.

The PNOC plans to build wells inside the buffer zone of the national park to draw steam for the 40-megawatt geothermal power plant that PNOC will build in Barangay Mailum, Bago City, about 21.5 kilometers south of here.

Environment groups have opposed PNOC's entry to the park because one of the last remaining forests in Negros Occidental is located inside the MKNP.

The MKNP, one of the few surviving national parks in the country, is home to near-extinct flora and fauna.

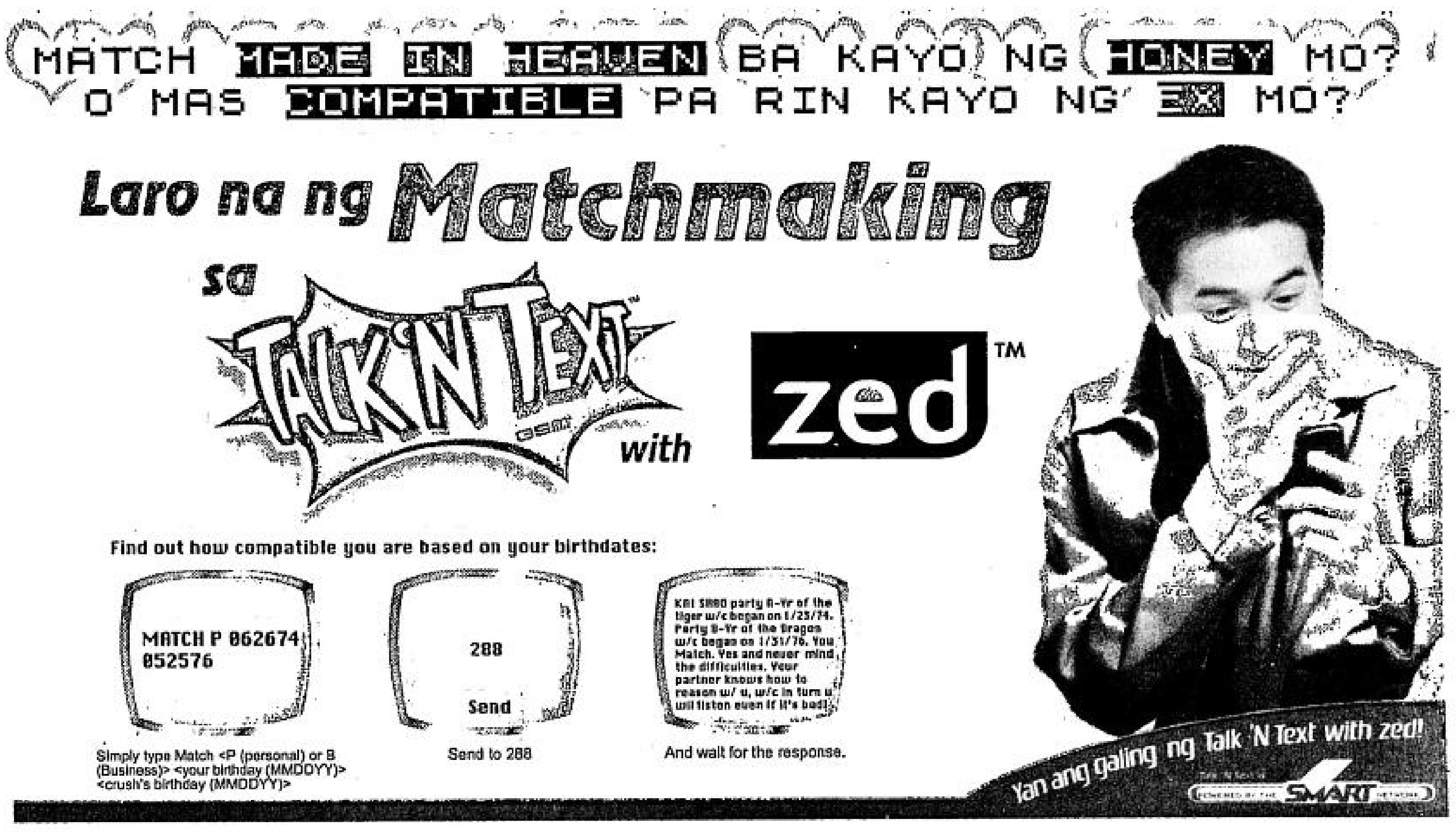
Environment groups stressed that many century-old trees inside the park will have to be cut once the PNOC builds roads leading to the geothermal wells.

Delia Locsin, a member of the MKNP Protected Area Management Board, said the 169-hectare buffer zone is not in the periphery of the MKNP but at the heart of the park itself.

"We have nothing against geothermal energy, what we are against is development aggression into the park," she said.

During a recent visit to the province, Environment Secretary Heherson Alvarez said the creation of the buffer area is in accordance with law.

He said only .5 percent or about 30 hectares of the 24,000 hectare-MKNP would be affected by the extraction of geothermal energy.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'UNION BUSTING'

Workers slam NBI for picket attack

TARLAC CITY—A Manila-based labor federation assailed the National Bureau of Investigation for the Aug. 1 "brutal attack" on 24 protesting workers of a food company in Barangay Tibag here.

The National Coalition for the Protection of Workers' Rights II (NCPWR II) said the "workers were peacefully picketing when NBI agents suddenly swooped down on them."

"Without provocation (they were) kicked, slapped and hit with (the barrels of) M14 and M16 rifles," the group claimed in a statement.

Workers began picketing the main production plant of the food chain Cindy's in Barangay Tibag on July 10, the day the management of the Multipurpose Achievement Corp. (MAC), which owns the food chain, laid off 23 employees.

They received their termination orders a day before these were made effective.

In February, the Cindy's management terminated the services of eight employees. The management claimed the eight were caught stealing gasoline but workers said they were union organizers.

"This is a clear case of union busting," according to members of the Samahan ng mga Manggagawa ng Multipurpose Achievement Corp. Cindy's (SMMACC).

Arrested on Aug. 1 were Elmer Navarro, SMMACC president, Andy Malihan, vice president, Melchor Mariano, secretary, Rizal David, press relations officer, and 20 others.

The workers were "detained for one night at the NBI headquarters in Tarlac City . . . and were made to stand the whole night," the labor group said. "(And they) were made to undergo drug tests like ordinary criminals."

Sister Angelita Navarro, NCPWR II national secretary, said "the NBI has no business meddling in legitimate workers' protests."

Lawyer Florencio Binalay, NBI Tarlac chief, admitted ordering the arrest of the 24 protesters without warrants because "they continued disrupting the operations of Cindy's."

The workers were caught in the act of committing a crime, he said, adding that economic sabotage charges were filed against them.

"We are just doing our job and we treat everybody equally," he earlier told the INQUIRER.

He also denied claims that NBI agents deliberately hit the protesting workers with Armalite rifles. He said the workers might have been hit during a commotion while they were being led to the NBI vehicles.

Executive Judge Arsenio Adriano dismissed the charges against the workers. He said it was well within the rights of the workers to stage protest actions.

The day after the arrest, on Aug. 2, relatives of the detained protesters gathered in front of the NBI headquarters "to make sure they would not end up in the ditches."

They followed the vehicles that brought the arrested workers to the court, which is about 200 meters away from the NBI headquarters. *Russell Arador and Ronald Dizon, PDI Central Luzon Desk*

Batanes to focus on agriculture

TUGUEGARAO CITY—To lessen Batanes' dependence on the National Food Authority for its rice supply, the provincial government would use its resources more on agriculture, the province's governor, Vicente Gato, said.

Gato, during a visit to the regional Department of Agriculture office here, said they plan to develop a farm reservoir to impound rainwater in the town of Itbayat. The impounded water would be used for rice production.

A total of 2,379 pouches of assorted vegetable seeds from the Department of Agriculture have been distributed to municipal agriculturists in six towns to lower prices of vegetables in the province.

The DA director for Cagayan Valley, Gumersindo Lasam, pledged to allot the first half of P1 million from the savings to fund the mini-irrigation dam project in Itbayat.

Lasam also promised to expedite the construction of a 38-km farm-to-market road connecting the 20 project sites, and of six shallow tube wells and the purchase of a hand tractor.

Gato said if the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization would include Batanes in its World Heritage List, the country's northernmost province would become a favorite destination of local and foreign tourists.

He said if this happens, tourists would love to discover how typhoons that regularly visit Batanes have affected the lifestyle of Ivatans, the people of Batanes.

Tourism and food production go hand in hand, he added. *Estanislao Caldez, PDI Northern Luzon Burea*

Priests team up to fight debts

DAVAO CITY—He biked for peace in Mindanao. Now, he's running. This time, for debt repudiation.

Cycling priest Amado "Picx" Picardal is teaming up with running priest Robert Reyes to press the government to stop paying its $90-billion foreign debt and start spending for the people.

Reyes, who has been running for five years for various causes, said he and Fr. Picx are on a campaign to persuade the government to free the country from foreign debt and domination.

Reyes and Picardal joined calls to re-channel debt payments to basic services and programs for sustainable development.

They called for a rejection of debt-reduction initiatives tied to structural adjustment programs.

Both priests started their campaign Monday in schools in Davao City.

They also plan to work together for peace in Mindanao anytime this month.

Speaking on Monday's flag-raising ceremony at the City Hall, Reyes said the Philippines has a $90-billion foreign debt burden, whose principal the country is not even paying yet.

But the government is paying $9 billion in interests alone.

According to Reyes, the government has earmarked P211 billion of its P649-billion budget to pay for the debts. The amount is bigger than the combined proposed budgets for education, health and agriculture.

"Instead of the revenue going to the IRA (Internal Revenue Allotment) of Davao, it goes to other countries. Our poverty is due to the fact that we are indebted. We have to learn to be self-sufficient and self-reliant," Reyes said.

For 20 years now, the government uses 20 to 30 percent of the national budget for debt payments because the automatic appropriations law makes debt service the highest priority in public spending.

"This is a grave injustice to our people's urgent need for basic services," said a statement issued for the "Run Against the Debt" campaign by Reyes, Picardal, the Freedom from Debt Coalition, Bukluran sa Ikauunlad ng Sosyalistang Isip at Gawa (Bisig), Movement for the Advancement of Student Power (MASP) and civil society groups in Davao.

The group said the greater injustice is that most of the country's debts did not even benefit the Filipino people.

"These debts include debts of private crony corporations which were guaranteed and assumed by the government, debts from projects that displaced communities and damaged the environment, debts which were contracted through fraud and onerous contracts and debts wasted through corruption," the groups said.

"These are illegitimate debts from which creditors, corrupt officials and crony corporations made money (and which our people are paying not only with their taxes but also with their lives," they added.

Reyes said the debts are immoral, onerous and a source of corruption. *Ayan C. Mellejor, PDI Mindanao Bureau*

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Priest killer to stay in jail

COTABATO CITY—Convicted priest killer Edilberto Manero, who was reported to be released soon, will remain in jail, according to the Bureau of Corrections.

Bureau of Corrections Director Ricardo Macala told Notre Dame Broadcasting Corporation (NDBC) in Kidapawan City that a directive from the Department of Justice for Manero's release has yet to reach his office.

Macala said there was a recommendation for Manero's presidential pardon during the administration of ousted President Estrada but the Board of Pardons and Parole (BPP) did not act it upon.

He said Manero's appeal for release is still undergoing scrutiny by the BPP.

"The process is ongoing but what is clear is that there's no order to release him from jail as of yet," Macala told NDBC in a telephone interview from Manila.

Explaining the process, Macala said the BPP would recommend to the President the granting of parole to a particular detainee.

Once granted, it is only then that the Bureau of Corrections would allow an inmate to take a step to freedom.

Manero was said to have completed his release papers and would come out of jail very soon. He was the man who admitted to pulling the trigger that killed Italian missionary priest Tulio Favali.

Now in his 50s, Manero is serving as caretaker of the Ina ng Laging Awa parish inside the national penitentiary.

Manero was supposed to be pardoned by then President Estrada along with his brother Norberto alias Commander Bucay and several other detainees.

But a public outcry has forced the government to recall the presidential pardon to the Maneros.

Norberto, who in 1992 managed to get out of jail, first refused to surrender and had been considered a fugitive. He later surrendered, was jailed and transferred to Sarangani jail to face murder and kidnapping charges.

He bolted the Sarangani Jail, claiming he wasn't sure of getting a fair trial. After several days in hiding, Manero surrendered to Presidential Assistant for Mindanao Jesus Dureza.*Edwin O. Fernandez, PDI Mindanao Bureau*

Pampanga mayors urge quarry audit

CITY OF SAN FERNANDO—Sensing irregularities, the Pampanga Mayors League demanded a "full accounting" of the quarry operations being managed by the Department of Environment and Natural Resources and its corporate arm in the province's lahar-laden areas since 1999.

The provincial board also asked the DENR's Natural Resources and Development Corp. to present a "complete financial report of all quarry collections" in Pampanga.

Gov. Manuel Lapid has ordered the hiring of checkers to help the NRDC monitor quarry operations in Bacolor, Porac, Mabalacat, Sta. Rita, Lubao, Floridablanca and Mexico towns.

The effort to press the NRDC to open its financial records came after Bacolor Mayor Romeo Dungca Jr. unearthed discrepancies between the reports of the NRDC and the municipal treasurer's office on the number of trucks that haul sand out of Bacolor between July 4 and 17.

Dungca noted a difference of 1,394 trucks in the NRDC report. He said the municipal government lost P209,000 from the desilting or P418,200 from regular quarry operations.

"Other municipalities with quarrying activities could possibly be affected by a similar discrepancy in Bacolor," the PML said in a resolution it passed Thursday last week.

Mabalacat Mayor Marino Morales, PML president, handed the resolution to the NRDC on Friday.

He said the PML would also push for a probe on the "incompetence, mismanagement and failure (of the NRDC) to regulate quarrying within the FVR Megadike in Bacolor and Porac."*Tonette Orejas, PDI Central Luzon Desk*

9 big banks fined for $ speculation

(From page A1)

She professed admiration for Prime Minister Mahathir Mohamad who in 1998 implemented controls to shield Malaysia's ringgit from the fallout of the Asian economic crisis.

Her warning spooked the Philippine Stock Exchange, its 30-company main index slipping past the 1,300-point psychological support to end at 1,278.40. *(See story in Business, Page B1.)*

"You would expect such a reaction (from Ms Macapagal's statement), and you can't blame investors," said Fritz Aclan, KGI Securities vice president.

The same warning, however, did not sow terror in the currency market. The peso closed in Manila at 53 to the dollar, up from 53.150 on Wednesday.

Even so, Ms Macapagal said the country's economic fundamentals indicated that the peso should be valued at 50 against the dollar.

"I have instructed the central bank to make sure that value is protected and returned to within the year," she said.

Ms Macapagal insisted that the central bank remained an independent body, but she pointed out that the executive branch had a vote on the policy-making Monetary Board.

Camacho, Buenaventura

After the news conference, however, Finance Secretary Jose Camacho said the Philippines was committed to a free trading of the peso.

Buenaventura also told Dow Jones Newswires that he had not discussed with Ms Macapagal the issue of imposing currency controls to boost the peso.

The Philippines had abandoned decades of currency controls of one form or another in the early 1990s. All administrations since have tirelessly reiterated that the country wouldn't reimpose controls.

Traders said the Macapagal administration was highly unlikely to impose foreign exchange controls given the country's limited foreign reserves that are among the lowest in East Asia at $14.3 billion at the end of July.

"We don't have the economic muscle to impose controls," the treasury head of a large Philippine bank told Dow Jones Newswires on condition of anonymity. "The reserves aren't there and we're not Malaysia."

Other currency strategists warned that should the perception take hold that controls were in the offing, there would be a massive outflow of dollars from the Philippines.

Name them

The BSP seemed content with countering speculation through less drastic measures, such as imposing fines on erring banks, raising the liquidity reserve requirement of banks and limiting the amount of dollars that banks may hold.

In its latest move, the BSP not only imposed fines on banks violating foreign exchange regulations but also decided to name them.

Last year, more than 21 banks and moneychangers were penalized but the BSP refused to reveal their names.

Most of the violations related to failing to provide adequate documentation for foreign exchange transactions.

Banco de Oro of the SM Group of Companies was meted out the h@ighest penalty of P3.21 million for the 107 times that it split up of sales of over $10,000, the earlier limit for dollar sales not requiring documentation.

The limit has since been lowered to $5,000 in a bid to prevent speculation on the peso, which reached a six-month low of 54.3 to the dollar in July and has been unable to recover significantly since then.

A Banco de Oro spokesperson said "the development came as a surprise as the bank had never received any communication about the issue."

"As far as we know, we are complying with all the rules and regulations of the BSP," the spokesperson said.

Buenaventura said the nine banks had been given notice about their questionable transactions.

"They were asked to explain but their explanations were not acceptable. So we have written the bank officers involved as well as the bank presidents about the sanctions," he said.

"We also told them that subsequent violations after this would lead to the publication of the names of the officers involved as well as stiffer non-monetary penalties," Buenaventura added.

Such penalties include the suspension of certain licenses and the dismissal of bank officers, including country managers and directors.

Export and Industry Bank, which recently acquired Urban Bank's 28 branches, was slapped a fine of P720,000 for selling dollars to an importer without the required documents on 24 occasions.

Citibank

Citibank was found selling six forward contracts to a foreigner without the BSP's approval. It also sold dollars without the proper documents.

HSBC incurred a P90,000 fine for deficient documentation of its foreign exchange transactions.

BPI was reprimanded for allowing a client to buy dollars that were placed in a foreign currency deposit unit. This, according to BSP, constituted speculation.

Standard Chartered was found selling dollars to a client without the proper documentation. The bank, however, denied any wrongdoing.

"We have not received any notification from the BSP of any penalty. As far as the bank is concerned, all documentation required by the BSP to support any sale of foreign exchange has been provided," said Zeny Iglesias, head of the bank's external affairs.

China Banking Corp. was found to have sold dollars to a local financial institution, an act prohibited by the BSP.

CBC spokesperson Alexander Escucha explained that the $8,000 the bank sold to a brokerage firm was used to pay interest on an FCDU loan.

"The money was not used for speculation," he said.

Equitable PCI Bank was found to have sold dollars to a non-resident.

Buenaventura said he was confident that the imposition of fines would stop speculation.

"We sometimes get the feeling that banks think we're not serious about imposing penalties. Now they know how serious we are," he said.

Reserve requirements

The central bank has also raised liquidity reserve requirements and scrapped a tiering system on interest rates for overnight funds to mop up liquidity and defend the peso.

Buenaventura said the Monetary Board would be meeting today to discuss a widely anticipated two-percentage point hike in commercial banks' liquidity reserve requirements.

The two-percentage point hike would take the liquidity reserve requirement to 11 percent. Combined with the statutory reserve requirement at 9 percent, the total requirement would be at 20 percent.

Statutory reserves are held in cash or on deposit with the central bank while liquidity reserves can be invested in government securities yielding market rates of interest. ***With reports from AP, AFP and Reuters***

PDI, union panels ink new CBA

(From page A1)

Panelists hailed the fresh agreement as having struck a balance between ensuring PDI's corporate stability amid rising production costs and keeping its dedicated workforce among the most aptly compensated and secure in the local media industry.

Being, staying No. 1

"We are proud of the agreement . . . (I)t proves again that despite the built-in differences in the positions of management and union, we can come together for the good of the company," PDI president Alexandra Prieto-Romualdez said during the signing ceremony.

"This agreement reaffirms the teamwork and solidarity that has made the INQUIRER No. 1. No one can do it alone, neither union nor management. But together, we can meet challenges, emerge victorious from any crisis and prevail over forces that seek to destabilize the INQUIRER as an institution," she said.

PDI senior vice president David O. Valdes thanked the management and labor negotiating panels for serving as instruments of industrial peace, which "not only concerns the 380 people employed by the INQUIRER but also our families, dealers, newsboys and other members of society who depend on us."

Union president and sportswriter Marc Anthony Reyes remarked: "With this new CBA, the INQUIRER not only proved itself as a leading force in journalism but also as a champion of harmonious labor-management relations."

The new CBA grants, among others, an across-the-board wage increase spread out in the next three years, effective July 2001 to July 2003. This is on top of the substantial increases in existing employee benefits and the introduction of some new incentives—all in timely adjustment to the prevailing economic condition and commensurate to the INQUIRER'S continuing leadership in the print media.

There was an increase in the annual rice subsidy, medical care plan, eyeglass subsidy, antibiotics reimbursements, disability and death benefits and severance pay, among others.

As in the past, employees will get a 5-percent share of the annual net profit of the company, a benefit not enjoyed by employees in the rest of the media industry.

Members of the management negotiating team led by Valdes were associate editor Abelardo Ulanday, corporate human resources services head Jesse Francis Rebustillo, performance management systems administrator Stella Dado Panlilio, accounting department head Evelyn Escueta, audit manager Prescy Frago, and HR management services head Shirman Tan. Roberto Parel was company counsel.

Representing the union were Reyes, news reporters Christine Herrera, Cynthia Balana, Dona Pazzibugan, Norman Bordadora, Michael Lim Ubac, Volt Contreras and Jerry Esplanada, special projects writer Charles Buban, advertising account executive Lita Pascual, audit assistant Gerry Macalino and city circulation staff Nilo Alterado. Cesar Maravilla was union counsel.

Noli meets . . .

(From page A1)

top radio and television broadcaster before he ran for the Senate, admitted that until Sen. Sergio Osmeña rose to filibuster on the floor to stall the organization of the committees, he had no idea what the word meant.

"I'm a neophyte. I don't know these things," he said. "On the first day (Osmeña) stood up, (Sen. Joker Arroyo) turned to me and said, 'That's filibustering.' So I immediately looked up the dictionary to see what the word means."

According to De Castro, he learned that the word means "obstruction of progress in a legislative assembly by prolonged speaking."

Now that he knows what Osmeña was up to, De Castro does not find the idea favorable.

"People have high expectations of the Senate," he said, pointing out that the administration of President Macapagal-Arroyo was not installed by a "popular election, but by people power."

"People want more from the Senate, but we cannot do anything if the committees are not formed," said De Castro, who was to head the Senate's tourism and social service and rural development committees.

Another neophyte, Sen. Panfilo Lacson, was all ears.

"I patiently and attentively watched Serge delivering his long speech. I may one day find myself doing the same," Lacson told the INQUIRER in an interview yesterday.

Lacson, former chief of the Philippine National Police, said the controversy generated by accusations that he was holding millions of dollars in bank accounts abroad had hastened his education in Senate procedures.

"I was planning to be a member of the committee on silence for about three months in order to observe how things are done," he said.

However, he said the need to deliver a speech on a "point of personal privilege" to deny charges of money laundering and other crimes had forced him to learn quickly.

"It was not bad" was Lacson's assessment of how he fared in his first major speech at the Senate last Monday.

Already, he has managed to make light of those to continue to be "mere observers" at the Senate for the full length of their term.

"There is a song for them—'Di na Natuto (They never learn),'" he said, referring to the famous song by pop idol Gary Valenciano.

Different tack

The minority bloc took a different tack yesterday, with Osmeña ending his filibustering by moving to start the reorganization of the Senate committees.

To disprove allegations by the majority coalition that the opposition bloc was derailing work at the Senate, Osmeña nominated Arroyo as chair of the blue ribbon committee. But no voting ensued because of the lack of a quorum.

The majority coalition described Osmeña's move as a mere "political strategy" aimed at "squelching adverse public opinion" that had been dogging the minority bloc as a result of his filibustering.

The Senate is expected to again take up on Monday the issue of the committee chairmanships.

Osmeña said he would again nominate Arroyo and all the other members of the majority to their respective committees, except those being earmarked for Senate President Pro Tempore Manuel Villar and Majority Leader Loren Legarda.

The nominations of the two should be done by "unanimous consent" in the Senate, he said.

But Legarda insisted that no one could dictate on the majority bloc regarding whom it would nominate for the committee chairmanships.

Not on the table

For the third straight day yesterday, Osmeña took to the floor on the committee chairmanship issue. But he surprised everyone when he spoke for only 10 minutes and then called for the nomination of Arroyo to the blue ribbon committee.

This prompted Legarda to say that there was no quorum and that the nominations for the committee chairmanships were "not on the table" of yesterday's session.

A check of the senators still on the floor showed only 10 of the initially 14 senators who attended yesterday's 10 a.m. session (six from the majority and eight minority members) still present.

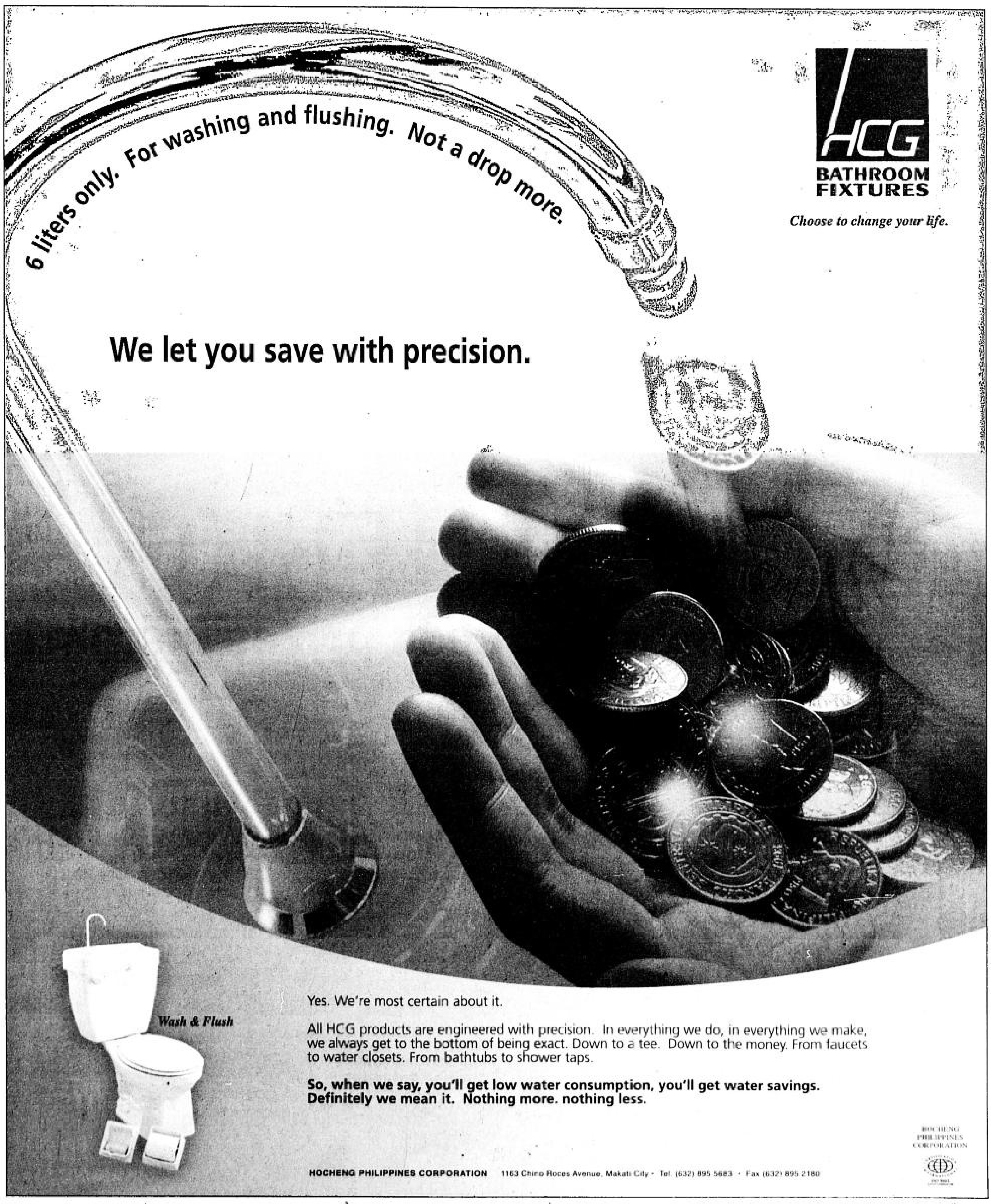
The session was thus adjourned until Monday.

The opposition was quick to note that four majority members—Villar, Arroyo, and Senators Robert Barbers and John Osmeña had left before Sergio Osmeña moved to open Arroyo's nomination.

As a result, Osmeña and Angara accused the majority bloc of now derailing the Senate committee organization.

In a news conference after the session, Osmeña and Sen. Edgardo Angara took pains to clarify why the former had resorted to filibustering in the past two days.

They said the "bone of contention" was the majority bloc's insistence on giving Villar and Legarda committee chairmanships.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Ping washed dirty money through Binondo–Rosebud

ONG

By Christine Herrera

IN a debriefing with US customs officials and a Philippine intelligence team in San Francisco in June, controversial whistle-blower Mary Ong, alias Rosebud, accused Sen. Panfilo Lacson of using the alleged black market network of the Binondo Central Bank to launder drug and ransom money.

Ong, a former agent of the Presidential Anti-Organized Crime Task Force, was one of six members of a joint military and police intelligence team that went to the United States to investigate Lacson. Officials included her in the team because of her alleged knowledge of illegal activities committed by Laoson and PAOCTF men.

Ong told the US and Philippine teams that she had "laundered" money in the United States in behalf of Lacson's group. She said the bulk of the money allegedly came from drug trafficking operations and kidnap-for-ransom activities.

She alleged that the Binondo Central Bank is involved in currency speculation in the black market.

When asked by US Customs Senior Special Agent Jerald Kawai in one of the debriefings how many times she had been to America, Ong said five times.

"But your immigration records show you came here more than 10 or 15 times in 1996 alone," Kawai reportedly told Ong.

Ong then admitted she had, claiming that she brought in money in behalf of Lacson's group.

The joint team, headed by Col. Mario Chan of the Intelligence Service of the Armed Forces of the Philippines and Senior Supt. Rodolfo "Boogie" Mendoza Jr., furnished the US Customs agents several sets of documents detailing Lacson's alleged criminal activities in the Philippines.

Among the documents were Ong's kidnap-for-ransom cases filed against Lacson.

The US authorities needed the documents to establish that the money came from illegal activities in case they filed a money-laundering case against Lacson and sought an indictment, Filipino team members said.

The debriefing was held to evaluate if Ong could be a credible witness against the senator in the event of a grand federal jury hearing, they said.

Ping asked to account for 480 kg of shabu

(From page A1)

lish that the shabu, conservatively estimated to be worth P800 million, was actually burned.

"An investigation is proper, considering that a number of former PNP officials like Lacson are being linked by the military to drug trafficking," Pureza said, adding that he has already directed the concerned Napolcom office to conduct its own probe.

Pureza said records showed that PNP operatives in Pangasinan seized the prohibited drug from four foreigners at a beach resort on Nov. 5, 1999.

He added that the drug haul became celebrated when then President Joseph Estrada visited the province to congratulate the police for making the bust.

The seized drugs were then sent to Manila to be used as evidence in the prosecution of the four suspected drug peddlers, but reportedly disappeared later, Pureza said.

Former Pangasinan Vice Gov. Gonzalo Duque said he received reports that the drugs were burned in January in "utmost secrecy."

He said this appeared suspicious, since under existing rules, representatives of the court, the justice department, the PNP, the provincial government and the Dangerous Drug Board should be present during the destruction of illegal drugs.

Pangasinan Provincial Police Office Director Leopoldo Bataoil said he only recently received reports that the confiscated shabu was burned in compliance with a court order.

Vice Governor and Pangasinan Anti-Drug Abuse Foundation executive officer Oscar Lambino said the PNP, DOJ and the DDB should conduct a thorough investigation, adding that it is in the public interest that the findings be made known as soon as possible.

Some support for Corpus

As the calls were made, military intelligence head Col. Victor Corpus, under fire from Lacson and the latter's supporters for accusing the former PNP chief of money laundering, got a few words of support from Malacañang yesterday.

Executive Secretary Alberto Romulo, in a radio interview with dzMM, said that he believed that Corpus would not make the allegations "without basis."

Romulo made the remark when asked if Corpus, head of the Intelligence Service of the Armed Forces of the Philippines, could be held liable if he failed to prove that Lacson has hundreds of millions of dollars abroad.

"I understand that this will be taken up by the Senate blue ribbon committee so I think that is the proper forum for this," Romulo added.

The comments came a day after a US congressional aide confirmed that US anti-money laundering and drug enforcement agencies were "seriously investigating" Lacson on suspicion that he might have broken international laws.

The other day, Malacañang Press Undersecretary Roberto Capco denied that the operation was politically motivated.

He said that it was a national security operation aimed at uncovering international crimes such as kidnapping and drug trafficking.

Militants

For their part, militant groups assailed opposition senators for allegedly blocking the investigation of Lacson, which civil society groups have been seeking.

Fisherfolk group Pamalakaya dared senators to cross party lines to preserve the integrity of the Senate and uphold the public interest.

The leftist party-list group Bayan Muna made a similar call but directed it to Malacañang.

"In the interest of justice, the national government should do all in its power to unearth all the details and the facts pertaining to the very serious charges against Lacson," Satur Ocampo, Bayan Muna president and representative-elect, said in a statement.

"The allegations against Lacson and the evidence being presented as proof of his guilt cannot be brushed off as part of a grand demolition job," he maintained.

Pamalakaya also invoked national interest, but said Lacson should be "punished and jailed."

Pamalakaya chair Rodolfo Sambajon accused Senators Rodolfo Biazon, John Osmeña and Vicente Sotto III of trying to save Lacson from answering for an "avalanche of crimes against the people."

"The Senate cannot take this issue for granted. This is the second biggest trial after the impeachment of deposed President Estrada. This would be Senate's last card for redemption or else it would face a grand display of public condemnation," Sambajon claimed.

He urged Lacson's allies to cross party lines and "join the people's quest for truth and justice."

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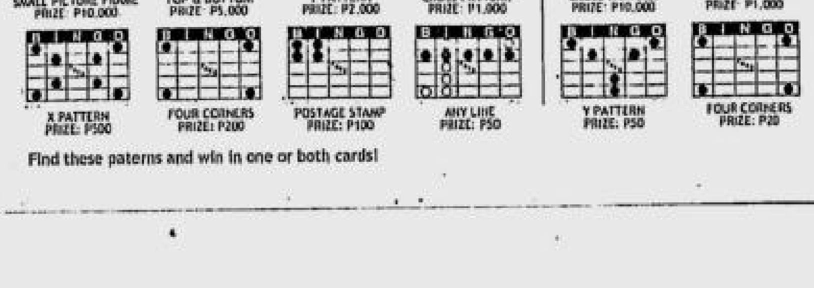

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Gloria reports: KL trip a big success

(Fro page A1)

Eaga (the East Asian Growth Area), I talked about Mindanao," Ms Macapagal said addressing a gathering of foreign and local businessmen at the Marco Polo Hotel here.

Gateway

Ms Macapagal said peace would speed the economic growth of Mindanao and had urged Malaysian businessmen to make Mindanao their gateway to investment in the country, citing the proximity of Mindanao to Malaysia.

The President herself made Mindanao the gateway for her homecoming as she chose to land in Davao, considered the region's commercial center. She was scheduled to spend the night there.

The President pledged anew during her speech before the businessmen to wipe out the Abu Sayyaf, now the only Muslim militant group fighting in Mindanao which still holds 21 US and Filipino hostages in Basilan.

The President urged Malaysian businessmen to invest in Mindanao, now made safe by the new ceasefire accord.

Investment would also help end the fighting in Mindanao, Ms Macapagal said, stressing that "a peace agreement is a piece of paper unless we have development."

She called on assembled businessmen to "take advantage of these doors we opened up in my visit to Malaysia."

She also praised "the unstinting support of Malaysian Prime Minister Mahathir Mohamad, his government and the Malaysian state and people" for the growth of Mindanao and the settlement of the Muslim separatist problem.

Arroyo said Mahathir "exuded a deep affection for our people especially here in Mindanao."

Protesters

On arrival at the Davao International Airport around 3:15 p.m., the President was welcomed by Vice President and Foreign Affairs Secretary Teofisto Guingona, Defense Secretary Angelo Reyes, AFP Chief of Staff Gen. Diomedio Villanueva and other high-ranking and local officials led by Mayor Rodrigo Duterte.

The President was also greeted by picketers from various groups, including farmers, the militants led by Bagong Alyansang Makabayan and Bayan Muna.

While Ms Macapagal was announcing the good news on the forging of the ceasefire deal between the government and the MILF, protesters demanded the resolution of the Bangsamoro conflict.

The Akbayan and Freedom from Debt Coalition met the President at the airport with calls for peace in Mindanao.

In response to Ms Macapagal's speech, William Mason, chair and chief executive of the AustralAsia Food and Beverage Corp., said peace and stability are the concerns of foreign investors.

He said the President's concern for peace and development is a big step that would build investor-confidence in the Philippines, particularly in Mindanao.

Fidel Ventura of the British delegation said the government has a lot to do to pursue peace and development.

Ventura said the solution to the Abu Sayyaf would have a "great contribution to the growth of Mindanao."

Cut red tape

The President told local businessmen that her administration is bent on cutting the bureaucratic red tape by half.

Ms Macapagal admitted that foreign investors "don't want too many people to talk to" and too many licenses to procure once they decide to invest in Mindanao.

"There should be transparency in approval and the processing of permits," she said.

The main thrust, Ms Macapagal said, is to provide more employment for Filipinos and to do that, the government must first attract investors.

She said she had directed Secretary Mar Roxas to include local government units in his "one-stop shop" project.

'Overseas Filipino investors'

"If foreign businessmen don't want to invest in the Philippines, then we shall."

So declared the leaders of "Ang Tunay Na Pinoy Movement" launched in Kuala Lumpur on the eve of the President's departure during a gathering of Malaysia-based Filipino workers.

Charina Chaku, one of the movement's leaders, said they aim to raise P1 million as a start-up fund for a business in Manila. So far, they have already raised P630,000 from fellow Pinoys.

President Macapagal noted that the Malaysia's Filipino community is the first among Filipino expatriates who are setting up a common fund for investment in Manila.

There are around 600,000 OFWs in Malaysia, most of them undocumented illegal aliens who sneak into the country via Sabah.

"I thank you for helping my administration find ways to solve poverty. As a group that continually remits between US$7 to 8 billion a year, we consider the OFWs major economic investors in the country," she said.

"Actually, you are not just overseas Filipino workers, you are in fact overseas Filipino investors because of the contributions that you give back home," the President added.

During the dinner party at the Grand Ballroom of the Shangri-La Hotel, Chaku and other members of the Filipino Community Leaders' Forum presented a symbolic check to the President.

"We continue to send part of our salaries to relatives back home. And as a gesture of confidence to your government, we would like to donate part of the salaries we earn here as an initial donation to set up an investment in the Philippines," she added.

The group passed around a giant pewter bowl to guests to donate to its investor fund.

Ms Macapagal lamented the situation where Filipinos need to go abroad to seek employment.

"If not for your employment here, you could be part of the unemployed back home. You have contributed greatly to the economy. In fact, the Filipino community in Malaysia is bigger than those in Japan, Hong Kong and Singapore," she said.

"For some time, our country will continue to be heavily dependent on overseas Filipino investors. By giving the best in your field, you continue to sharpen the favorable image of the Filipino," the President added.

In the same event, Ms Macapagal witnessed the awarding of symbolic keys to three OFWs who are set to acquire housing loans of up to P2 million from the Pag-Ibig fund.

The awardees include Narissa Dangaran, a housekeeping supervisor at the New World Hotel; Rande de Leon, an employee at the Victoria Station Restaurant and Alfredo Sequena, a musician at the Concorde Hotel.

The Housing and Urban Development Coordinating Council recently passed a resolution increasing the limit of housing loans granted to OFWs who want to build homes in the Philippines from P500,000 to P2 million. *With reports from Ayan C. Mellejor, Anthony S. Allada and Joel B. Escovilla, PDI Mindanao Bureau, AFP, AP*

RP to set up de facto embassy in Sabah

DAVAO CITY—President Gloria Macapagal-Arroyo yesterday announced that Manila will set up a de facto embassy in the Malaysian state of Sabah to protect hundreds of thousands of Filipinos there.

The Philippines has a historical claim to oil- and timber-rich Sabah but both governments had put the issue on the backburner in recent years.

Ms Macapagal said on her return from a three-day visit to Malaysia that the Philippine government would set up "an economic and cultural office" in Sabah, similar to one Manila has in Taiwan which serves as a de facto embassy in the absence of diplomatic relations between Manila and Taipei.

She noted that there were nearly half a million Filipinos working in Sabah, many of whom are undocumented and vulnerable to harassment by immigration officials.

She said many such Filipinos sent back by Malaysia to the southern Philippines "end up becoming boat people for a few days" since Filipino authorities also do not have records showing they are residents.

"It is a very big irritant, not only an irritant in our relationship (with Malaysia), but a great cause of suffering for those individuals," Ms Macapagal said.

"It is time to stop the suffering of our brothers in Sabah. It is time to put an office in Sabah to protect them," Ms Macapagal said.

The Sabah issue has for years been an irritant in bilateral ties with Kuala Lumpur. Ms Macapagal's father, the late President Diosdado Macapagal, revived a claim on the state in 1963.

Manila lays claim to Sabah on the grounds that it was ruled by the Sulu sultanate in the 15th century.

But attempts by previous Philippine administrations to drop the claim have been shot down by the Senate, and relations between Kuala Lumpur and Manila have broken off twice because of the row. *AFP*

GMA: No Anwar . . .

(From page A1)

Mahathir Mohamad's office first.

"If he gave so much as a hint he would not be happy, I would not go through with it," the President told a news conference wrapping up a three-day visit here.

She expressed admiration for Mahathir, Asia's longest-serving leader, likening him to a "brother" and a model leader for his "plain talk and common sense. I'm very much like that, too."

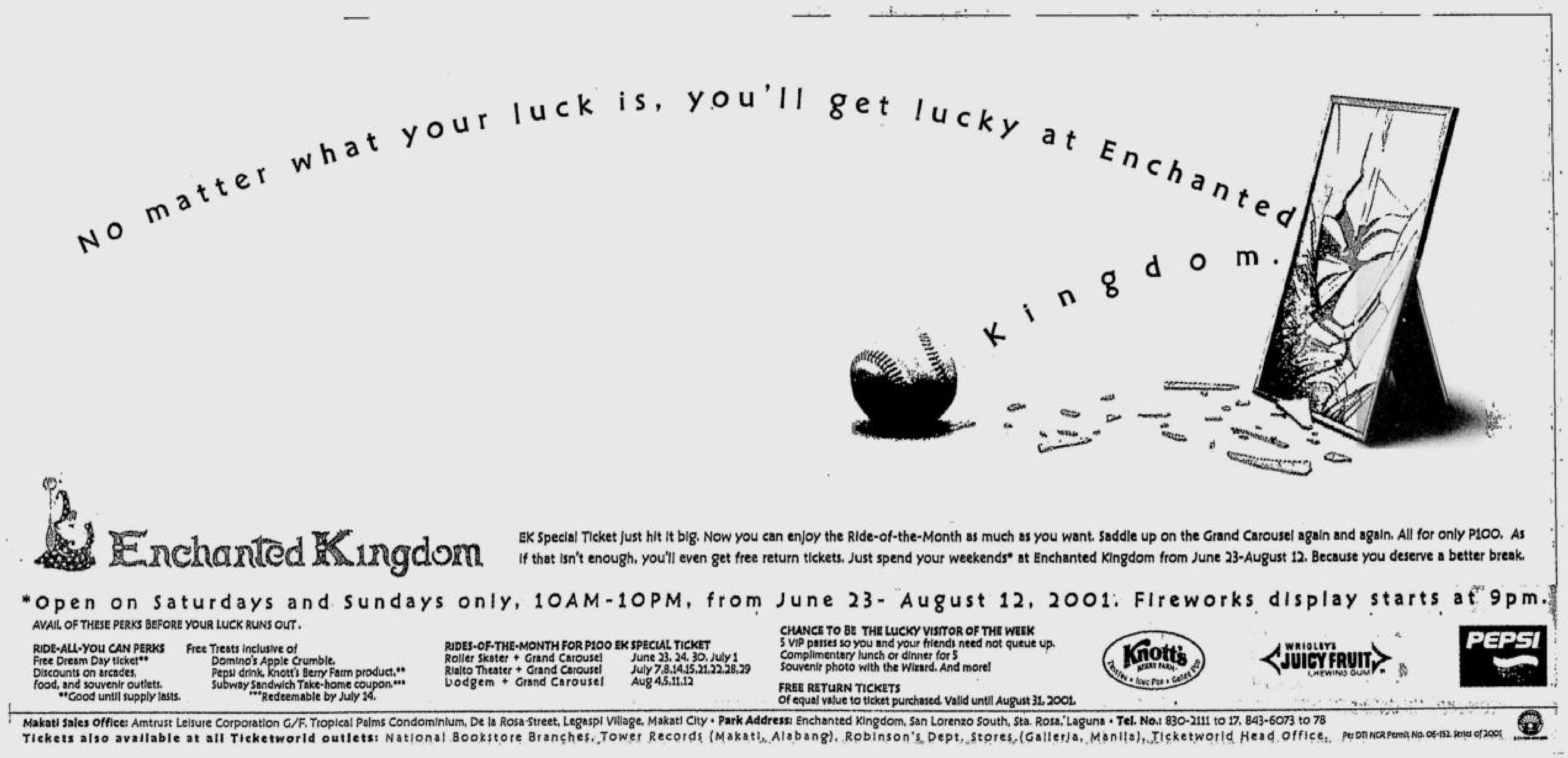
Bedrock principle

Anwar was Mahathir's heir-apparent until the pair had a falling out over the Asian economic crisis and Mahathir fired him as deputy premier, triggering Malaysia's biggest street protests in decades.

Anwar has been tried and convicted of sodomy and corruption and sentenced to 15 years in prison. He claims that he was framed to prevent him from challenging Mahathir for power. The government has denied it.

Azizah leads the National Justice Party, member of an opposition front that made gains against Mahathir's government in elections in 1999, though Mahathir's ruling coalition retained power.

President Macapagal declared she would abide by the Association of Southeast Asian Nations' bedrock principle of non-interference in each other's internal affairs, noting that the Philippines had invited Malaysian help in brokering this week's ceasefire with the Moro Islamic Liberation Front. *AFP*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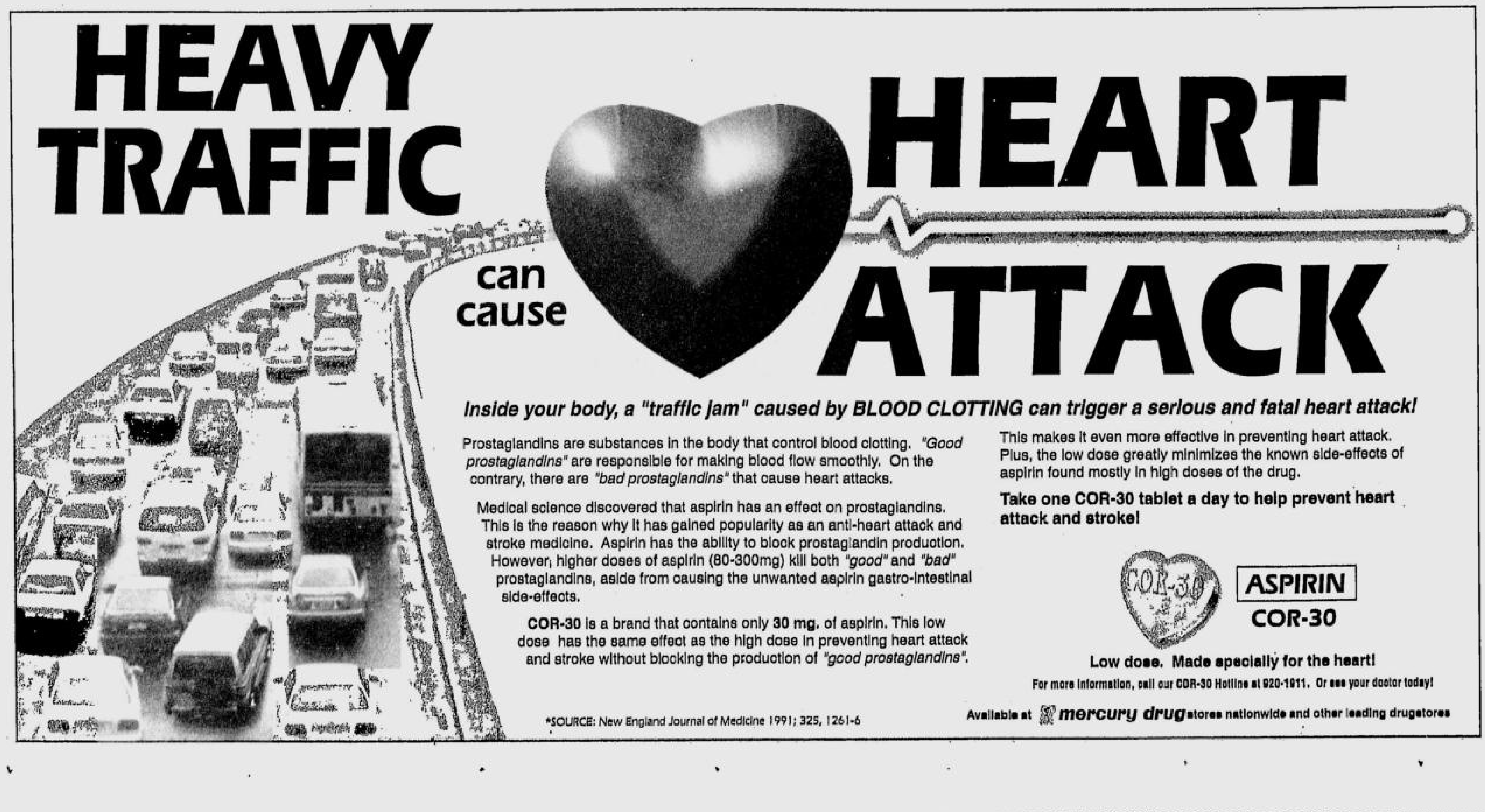
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*SOURCE: New England Journal of Medicine 1991; 325, 1261-6

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DOJ now bats for Abu trial in Basilan

By Michael Lim Ubac

JUSTICE Secretary Hernando Perez yesterday said he was now amenable to having captured Abu Sayyaf members and allies arraigned and tried in Basilan.

Perez said he had decided to withdraw his earlier position that the arraignment and trial be held in Cebu City.

He said the sole concern now of government prosecutors was "whether the military would protect the detainees from attacks by unscrupulous groups."

Perez had earlier asked the Supreme Court to allow the transfer of the trial venue because of the security risks in Zamboanga City, where there is an ongoing crackdown on the bandit group.

"I have indicated to the Supreme Court that the Department of Justice has no objection to the transfer of venue from Zamboanga City," he said yesterday.

Perez said it was too risky to transport the detainees based in Metro Manila, like Abu Sayyaf leader Hector Janjalani, to Zamboanga.

The DOJ's position was contained in a comment to a petition filed last month by Zamboanga Mayor Ma. Clara Lobregat.

Last Wednesday, the high court issued a two-page order summoning top government officials to a conference on Aug. 13 to resolve the standoff over the venue of the arraignment and trial.

Clerk of Court Luzviminda Puno identified the officials as Perez, Interior Secretary Jose Lina, Defense Secretary Angelo Reyes, Sen. John Osmeña; Cebu Gov. Pablo Garcia, Cebu City Mayor Tomas Osmeña, Armed Forces chief Diomedio Villanueva, Philippine National Police chief Leandro Mendoza and Chief Supt. Avelino Razon Jr.

The tribunal had earlier ordered the transfer of the venue of the arraignment and trial from Zamboanga City to Cebu City.

But Senator Osmeña opposed the transfer and filed a motion for reconsideration with the high court. Garcia and Mayor Osmeña also sent a letter to the high court expressing their opposition to the transfer.

In her petition, Lobregat said the trial of Janjalani and other suspected Abu Sayyaf members and sympathizers should not be held in her city for "security reasons."

She said the earlier transfer of the trial from Basilan to Zamboanga had "unnecessarily jeopardized and imperiled the generally peaceful and secure conditions of the city."

She also warned that the trial and continued detention of the suspects in Zamboanga would invite desperate rescue attempts by their armed comrades.

Nacorda: FBI also suspects military

(From page A1)

theory arose during his meeting with FBI agents at the US Embassy in Manila.

"FBI agents approached me several times, until I finally accepted their invitation. We met last July 3 at the US Embassy, and I was surprised to see the amount of information they gathered on the possible military conspiracy," Nacorda told the INQUIRER in an exclusive interview.

He said the agents disclosed to him detailed accounts from several sources, including police authorities, which supported the conspiracy theory. But he said that until that time, they had not been able to get a first-hand account from someone taken hostage by the Abu Sayyaf. "They revealed to me their information, I told them my story," Nacorda said. "When I finished telling them my story, one of the agents said, 'Now our information is confirmed.'"

At the Zamboanga City Reformatory Center, Hector Janjalani, younger brother of the late Abu Sayyaf founder Abdurajak Abubakar Janjalani, confirmed the supposed connivance of certain military, police and government officials with the Abu Sayyaf.

Hector Janjalani said that based on what he had learned from his brother, government officials were helping arm Abu Sayyaf members or masterminding abductions themselves.

Attaché case

On Wednesday, Nacorda, parish priest of Lamitan, accused five military officers of conniving with the Abu Sayyaf hostage-takers and allowing them to escape from the compound of the Lamitan hospital on June 2.

He named them as Brig. Gen. Romeo Dominguez, then 1st Tabak Division commander; Col. Jovenal Narcise, the previous acting 103rd Army Brigade commander; two Narcise aides, Capt. Hubert Acierto and Capt. Nicolas Quemado; and the executive officer of the 18th Infantry Battalion, Maj. Eliseo Campued.

Dominguez has denied the accusation.

Nacorda said that on June 2, Dominguez went to Zamboanga to meet with the families of some of the Abu Sayyaf hostages, including those of Raul Recio.

The meeting took place while the siege on the hospital and church was taking place and the bandits and their captives were holed up in the church compound.

This was how Nacorda narrated the events:

Dominguez flew by helicopter to Lamitan and disembarked at the Lamitan hospital, where Narcise was waiting for him.

Members of the hospital staff saw the general with an aide who was carrying an attaché case.

Some nurses overheard Dominguez saying, "*Matatapos na 'to ngayon* (This will be finished today)," after which he plucked five P1,000 bills from the attaché case which seemed to be "full of money."

Dominguez then handed the bills to the hospital staff and said the money was for their *merienda* (snack).

He then picked up a satellite phone and spoke with Abu Sayyaf spokesperson Abu Sabaya, who was supposedly on the other line.

The general met with Narcise at the hospital that morning. At around 4 p.m., police, civilian volunteers and military troops, who were surrounding the hospital and the church's compound, were ordered pulled out purportedly for a briefing with the two military officials.

Nacorda said that on that same morning, while the bandits and the captives were holed up in the church, many of them overheard Sabaya talking over his satellite phone and asking, "*Andyan na ba* (Is it there)?"

"So I told this to the FBI agents, and they said, 'Now this is no longer a suspicion. Now it's already confirmed,'" said Nacorda, who was himself kidnapped by the Abu Sayyaf, first in 1994 in Isabela and on June 2 in Lamitan.

Witnesses in Lamitan said military troops had walked casually to the cordoned-off area and ordered the police and civilian volunteers stationed at the back of the church compound to pull out and attend the supposed briefing.

"*Alis kayo dito. Trabaho 'to ng* military (Get out of here. This is a military operation)," the soldiers were quoted as saying before they left the area as casually as they came.

But some civilian volunteers stayed and fired at the Abu Sayyaf, Nacorda said.

When this happened, he said, Sabaya made another phone call and complained in Taglish: "I thought the area had been cleared. Why is there still shooting?"

The civilian volunteers then got a scolding from military officials, Nacorda said.

Oral defamation

In Catbalogan, Samar, Dominguez said he would file oral defamation charges against Nacorda today or as soon as he had completed the necessary documents.

Dominguez said he would ask his lawyer whether to file the complaint in Catbalogan where he is now based or in Manila where his family lives.

While reading the INQUIRER'S front-page story yesterday on Nacorda's allegations, Dominguez kept saying in Filipino: "This Nacorda is incredible."

"There is no truth to that . . . I don't know how he was able to say those things. I do not know what his motives are," the general said.

He said he could not remember carrying a black attaché case or whether he owned one at the time he was assigned to Jolo.

"This is my first time to be accused like this. I only live a simple life," he told the INQUIRER.

In Manila, Armed Forces spokesperson Brig. Gen. Edilberto Adan brushed off Nacorda's claims.

"What Father Nacorda is saying is all hearsay," Adan said. "It's absurd that our officers will play games with the very lives of their men."

Adan also said the witnesses quoted by Nacorda could not be relied on.

"We understand that his witnesses were all under emotional distress because of the Lamitan attack. They have a very limited perception of what happened," Adan said, adding that Nacorda may have been traumatized himself.

Adan also said the AFP leadership had earlier tried to speak with Nacorda, but that he had refused.

"We would like to get the basis of his accusations so we can launch our own inquiry," Adan said.

High-caliber guns

Speaking to the INQUIRER in Filipino, Hector Janjalani said that some politicians in Sulu had directly sold their guns to the Abu Sayyaf.

"The guns are all of high caliber. Even I was surprised at how they were able to get the guns, but my brother said these were easily bought, sa tabi-tabi," he said. "All the activities of the Abu Sayyaf, the politicians, military and police were behind them."

Janjalani also said the problem in Basilan was simple but that the lack of sincerity among government officials had made the situation worse.

"The politicians, military and police have been making money off all the wars in Mindanao," he said. "If you audit the wars, you'll find that not all the money has been spent. Part of it went to some people's pockets."

Janjalani backed Nacorda's statement accusing the five military officers as conniving with the Abu Sayyaf.

"He has grounds to talk because he has stayed long in Basilan and has been a kidnap victim himself," Janjalani said.

But AFP chief of staff Gen. Diomedio Villanueva told the INQUIRER in a phone interview: "Until now, Janjalani is still considered an opponent and he is just destroying us. He is using one single moment of opportunity to destroy us."

Villanueva said it would be unthinkable for military officials to arm the Abu Sayyaf.

"It has never happened," he said.

Villanueva also described Dominguez as "one of the most upright men in the (AFP)" and "an officer and a gentleman."

Investigation

In Manila, senators called for an investigation of Nacorda's allegation that the five military officers had connived with the Abu Sayyaf hostage-takers.

But if Senators Panfilo Lacson and Gregorio Honasan are to have their way, the investigation should focus on the supposed lapses of General Villanueva and military intelligence chief Col. Victor Corpus.

Like Dominguez, Lacson and Honasan are members of Philippine Military Academy Class of 1971.

"There's a failure of intelligence and there's a failure of leadership," Lacson said in an impromptu news briefing. "It is possible that the field commanders are being used as scapegoats for the incompetence of their superior officers."

He pointed out that intelligence was an important factor in the fight against terrorism.

Still, Lacson said the Senate would have to look into the "lapses in Basilan."

But even before the investigation can start, Lacson has already cleared the five of wrongdoing.

"In fairness to our soldiers, in fairness to our field commanders, I don't think they will go to the extent of conniving with the Abu Sayyaf," he said. Honasan also said "most, if not all, of the officers there are men dedicated to service."

"General Dominguez is our classmate, but we do not want to introduce any personal color to this," he said. "We will rise to defend not only General Dominguez but also the military organization from this kind of unfair attack."

Lacson and Honasan plan to file a resolution on the matter on Monday.

But Sen. Robert Barbers jumped the gun on them and filed Resolution No. 99 seeking an inquiry into Nacorda's claims.

Barbers said the Senate blue ribbon and national defense and security committees should lose no time in investigating the matter because "it has placed the AFP in a bad light, and the failure to clear (the officers) may lead to the demoralization of the organization."

Sen. Ramon Magsaysay Jr., who heads the defense panel, said they would "prioritize" the investigation and would travel to Basilan if necessary.

At the House, Surigao del Sur Rep. Prospero Pichay, national defense committee chair, is inviting Nacorda and the military officials he had accused to its first public hearing in Lamitan.

Pichay said the hearing would be "the proper forum" to address the problem in Basilan. ***With reports from Joselle Badilla, PDI Mindanao Bureau; Cynthia A. Borgueta, PDI Visayas Bureau; Carlito Pablo, Armand Nocum and Rocky Nazareno in Manila***

An Appeal to the President from the Cultural Community

Dear President Arroyo:

As writers, painters, sculptors, filmmakers, and other cultural workers, we must express our concern about Malacañang's interference in the selection of the Chairperson of the National Commission for Culture and the Arts (NCCA).

Obviously to prepare the way for the Palace's favored candidate – a retired politician – Ms. Victoria Garchitorena, head of the Presidential Management Staff, ordered a scheduled election by an NCCA Sub-Commission postponed – just as it was about to be held on the morning of July 5.

We must protest this interference by the Palace on two grounds.

First, it violates the NCCA Charter, which guarantees the Commission's functional independence, although it is supervised administratively by the Office of the President.

Second, in seeking to place a politician at the helm of the NCCA, it will set a dangerous precedent.

A Violation of NCCA's Independence

Republic Act No. 7356, which established the National Commission for Culture and the Arts on 3 April 1992, expressly provides that "the Commission should be an independent agency," (Sec. 8) and that "the Filipino national culture shall be free of political and economic structures which inhibit cultural sovereignty..." (Sec. 4).

Over these past nine years, the NCCA has functioned by following this principle of cultural development "of, by and for the people." It has developed policies, programs and projects through democratic deliberation and consensus. And it has elected its chair from among the members of the nation's culture and arts community.

Your Excellency might recall that, at the proclamation of the *Gawad Sa Manlilikha ng Bayan* Awards on March 2, you expressly recognized this principle of cultural independence, when you said: "Culture should *not* be regulated... While (the NCCA) is a body supported by the government, it is really peopled by those selected by the artists and the leaders themselves of Philippine culture. And therefore the NCCA is almost totally autonomous of the Philippine government."

Thus we find it disturbing, Mrs. President, that Ms. Garchitorena – claiming to act on your behalf – should now call up members of the NCCA Board on a candidate's behalf, without regard for NCCA's rules and processes.

Politician-chair Sets Bad Precedent

While we value the role of politicians in our public life, we believe that in the NCCA their direct participation will set a precedent from which the Commission may never recover.

Patronage and compromise – the way of politics – run counter to the meritocratic system for recognizing cultural and artistic excellence. And these political considerations could distort NCCA's grants programs, as indeed Government's cultural grants had oftentimes been distorted in the past.

Mrs. President, in raising these objections to Malacañang's interference in the NCCA's affairs, we are *not* endorsing any one for the position of NCCA chair. We want only to ensure that he or she comes from within our community. And that he or she is nominated and elected according to NCCA's rules and processes.

For these reasons, then, Mrs. President, we appeal to you to help us preserve the NCCA's independence and autonomy. The effectiveness of the Commission – its collaborative work and the support it has won from its cultural constituency – the very principle of cultural workers governing themselves – all these would be jeopardized if the PMS placed a retired politician forcibly into its leadership.

At a time when you say we Filipinos must pull together to lift up the common life, we do *not* need a distraction similar to the Cultural Center controversy which beset the last Administration.

Mrs. President, let the NCCA live by its Charter, and the nation's artists will do all they can to help achieve our shared vision for our country.

Yours respectfully,

Ang Kiu Kok-National Artist
Franz Arcellana-National Artist
Andrea O. Veneracion-National Artist
Nick Joaquin-National Artist.
Daisy H. Avellana-National Artist
Arturo Luz-National Artist
Levi Celerio-National Artist
Mauro Malang Santos-Gawad Para Sa Sining
Gregorio Brillantes-Gawad Para Sa Sining
Bienvenido S. Lumbera-RM Awardee
Regalado S. Jose-Pianist-Conductor
Regalado Trota Jose-CCP Centennial Artist

Ophelia Dimalanta, Gemino Abad, Ricardo M. de Ungria, Cristina Pantoja-Hidalgo, Andres Cristobal Cruz, Zenaida Amador, Joy G. Virata, Ramon Orlina, Denisa Reyes, Karina Bolasco, Felice Sta. Maria, Armita Rufino, Olga Severino Martel, Mike L. Bigornia, Bernardo Perez, O.S.B. Fr. Roy M. Rosales, Bishop Artemio S. Rillera, S.V.D., Emmanuel S. Torres, Impy Pilapil, Vicky Quirino Delgado, Odette Alcantara, Alfred A. Yuson, Carmen Guerrero Nakpil, Anton Juan, Augusto Villalon, Dick Baldovino, Pedro Abraham, Pablo A. Tariman, S.V. Epistola, Rosario Bitanga, F.M. Verano, Lydia Velasco, Magoo V. Avencia, Anita Yap Lim, Mike Austria, Jaime Medina, Juan Carlo Estagle, Susan Calalay Yniguez, Remy Boquiren, Sonny Yniguez, Danny Pangan, Ben F. Infante, Asuncion K. Ng, Soler Santos, Sonny Yabao, Walfrido T. Co, Remedios T. Jose, Rae Anne J. Valenzuela, Michael M. Coroza, Chardelle Anne B. Santos, Ernan Munoz, Gary Devilles, Imelda A. Estrelles, Beverly Siy, Menchu Aquino Sarmiento, Mimi Sison, Margarita Holmes, Chris Millado, Fortune Ledesma, Annabelle Adriano, Alma M. Calleja, Corazon J. Tan, Lourdes R. Montinola, Nellie Bengzon, B. Abella, Angela Araneta del Rosario, Charlson Ong, Helen M. Ong, Lita Escalon, Wynn Wynn Ong, Anna A. Pamplona, Josefina P. Manahan, Mart Jacinto Loinaz, Lulu Castaneda, Chit Gohu, Noli Yamsuan, Rick Lopez, Romulo A. de los Reyes, Brando C. Reyes, Edgar Santiago, Armando Sta. Ana, Mario Miclat, Melecio C. Fabros, Marianne R. Gancayco, Ramon Santos, Rony Diaz, Paulino Que, Evita T. Sarenas, Ma. Cristina O. Roxas, Richard G. Lopez, Ramon Villegas, Hetty K. Que, Antonio C. Martino, Lea M. de la Paz, Sr. Ancilla Cabula, Malu Afable, Dina Enriquez, Jackie Castillejo, Michael Williams, Apollo Abraham, Mayen Bustamante, Gerrard Fabie, Ramon S. Bagatsing III, Clarissa L. Avendano, Elizabeth Lolarga, Judy Ick, Ino Manalo, Romeo Jorge, Jose Dalisay Jr., Maita M. Reyes, Georgina R. Encanto, Ryan Olago, Ligaya Tiangon Rubin, Sandra Castro, Ethel Villafranca, Katrina Tungol, Florina H. Capistrano, Cristy Monastrial, Al Valenciano, Maribel Tan, Aleli Viray, Pat Castillo, Pablo Ruiz, Luna Sicat, Rolando B. Tolentino, Trinidad O. Regala, June D. dela Victoria, Nikko Zapata, Christine Crame, Sonny Locsin, Alden Lugnasin, Fidel Rillo, Lara Saguisag, Jose Wendell Capili, Roberto Anonuevo, Jenalyn Morales, Ricardo Cruz, Patrick Flores, Melvin Pascubillo, Enrique B. Batara and over 200 cultural workers whose names could not be accommodated in this space.

Silliman Centennial Ball at Polo Club

SILLIMANIANS in Metro Manila are invited to attend the Centennial Ball on Aug. 12, Sunday, at the Manila Polo Club to commemorate Silliman University's 100th year. Prizes, including P25,000 in cash, await the lucky alumni for this once-in-a-lifetime event. Whether you are 18 or 80, 25 or 50, join the fun and march down memory lane of the Dumaguete and the Silliman of your times. The Ball starts at 6 p.m. at the Polo Club located on McKinley Road in Forbes Park, Makati City. For tickets and information, call 523-29-93; 523-28-69.

Lacson admits going to HK on snooping mission

(From page A1)

letter," Fagan said in the letter to Lacson from Singapore, dated Aug. 9.

He was apparently referring to account numbers that Corpus has identified as Lacson's. The list was published in the INQUIRER on Sunday.

Bankers interviewed by the INQUIRER questioned the similar wording of an earlier statement from Citibank's corporate affairs director in Singapore. "A search of Canadian, Hong Kong and US records have (sic) not identified the account name and numbers reported in the (INQUIRER)," the letter said.

Asked if the statement meant that the accounts did not exist, a Citibank official said, "Please refer to the statement."

Speaking on condition of anonymity, the bankers said the Citibank statement is unsatisfactory in putting to rest the issue of whether Lacson indeed keeps or has kept accounts with the foreign bank.

One head of a commercial bank and former Citibanker said that Citibank could have been more specific in its apparent denial.

"Why don't they say so-and-so has no account with us, never did or never had any dealings?" the banker asked.

Another former Citibanker said: "It's not clear-cut, that's how it grabs me."

Power of attorney expanded

But in a statement released yesterday, Lacson also said he had "expanded" the special power of attorney (SPA) that he issued to Corpus to withdraw his alleged deposits totaling at least $211 million.

The new SPA, he claimed, would now give Corpus the authority to examine bank documents pertaining to his accounts even if the latter have been closed or if the deposits have been transferred.

"This will erase his fear that I have already withdrawn or transferred the money from the accounts he insists are mine," he said. "In short, he will be able to establish the paper trail." But, Lacson added, "unfortunately for him, he has been peddling lies," he added.

Corpus charged that Lacson has emptied his personal as well as joint bank accounts with deposed President Joseph Estrada in Hong Kong. Totaling $182.3 million, the deposits were allegedly lodged in two personal accounts of Lacson at Citibank and six joint accounts with Estrada in the same bank.

"He (Lacson) flew to Hong Kong to clean and clear his mess," said Corpus. "It's possible that Lacson had transferred the money to the United States, Canada or even to banks here in the country."

Corpus and justice officials have challenged Lacson to issue a written waiver of his rights under bank secrecy laws, arguing that the special power of attorney would provide limited access to bank records.

"The special power of attorney listed all eight accounts in Hong Kong but Lacson did not include those in the US and Canada," Corpus said.

The colonel, who did not provide documentary evidence to prove that the eight Citibank accounts were indeed cleaned up by Lacson, pledged to present proof in the "proper forum."

Corpus said similar waivers should also be signed by Lacson's wife Alice, ex-President Joseph Estrada and his wife Sen. Loi Ejercito.

The Isafp claims to have evidence that the Lacson couple and Estrada maintain in personal as well as joint accounts over $728.5 million in the United States, Canada and Hong Kong.

Corpus also noted that the copy of the special power of attorney given by Lacson's office misspelled his name as "Corpuz." "So the document is already defective," he said.

The other day, Lacson said he would issue such a waiver if Corpus would also waive his rights pertaining to own bank accounts.

"Why not?" Corpus replied yesterday. "I have nothing to hide."

Angara warns US rep

He also welcomed an earlier statement from the office of US Rep. Dana Rohrabacher confirming that US drug enforcement and anti-money laundering agencies are "seriously investigating" Lacson.

Rohrabacher aide Al Santoli said that the investigation is "based on very real initial evidence of large amounts of money being carried into the US."

Corpus said the statement "has big implications because it proves that there is evidence against Lacson."

"This proves that Isafp is not manufacturing allegations against Lacson," he claimed.

Sen. Edgardo Angara, however, warned Rohrabacher, vice chair of Asia/Pacific subcommittee of the US House of Representatives, to tread cautiously if he plans to initiate an inquiry into the allegations against Lacson.

"If a US congressional panel wants to look into money laundering, we can only say fine because that is a prerogative of Capitol Hill. But it should not be used as a forum to blacken the image of any member of the democratic opposition to the Arroyo administration," Angara said.

He said any inquiry should be conducted under strict guidelines to "distinguish between a no-nonsense congressional inquiry and carrying out a hatchet job for the Arroyo administration."

Erap and JV

Estrada, who has decided to sue Corpus and the INQUIRER, said he has kept $10,000 in an account in San Francisco since he was a senator, but again denied ever owning millions of dollars.

Estrada, in detention at the Veterans' Memorial Medical Center, claimed that this was his only dollar account in America.

"That is the only money I have in America," he said.

The President, who faces trial for plunder, said he has become "immune" to "fabricated charges" against him.

He said he would file a P100-million libel suit against Corpus and the INQUIRER so the Isafp chief can "prove if there is any truth to his allegations."

Estrada also welcomed a Senate investigation to bring out the truth.

One of his sons, San Juan Mayor Joseph Victor (JV) Ejercito, yesterday came to the defense of Lacson and questioned the timing of Corpus' expose.

Ejercito described the allegations against his party mate as a tactic of the Macapagal administration to divert public attention from a bribery scandal involving First Gentleman Mike Arroyo and from the sagging economy.

The controversy involving Arroyo fizzled out when potential witnesses admitted that their information was mere hearsay.

Ejercito hit the government for allegedly using the military to stage a "demolition job" against the opposition.

"It is really scary that the military is playing this role in politics," said the mayor.

"Colonel Corpus should opt to change his career line from intelligence service of the Army to show business. He has shown his potential anyway, and he seems promising," said Ejercito, whose father is a former movie star. *With reports from Donna Cueto, Agnes E. Donato and Elena R. Torrijos*

TRIVIA: Do you know that the ancient Romans built such an excellent system of roads that the saying arose "all roads lead to Rome," that is, no matter which road one starts a journey on, he will finally reach Rome if he keeps on traveling. The popular saying came to mean that all ways or methods of doing something end in the same result, no method being better than another.

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Auto-Freeze

*Photo may vary from actual unit.

GE's classic single-door refrigerator now has a one-touch defrost and auto-freeze button in one. After a splash-free defrosting, it automatically turns itself on and activates your unit's cooling system. That easy. That's why we're *Asia's Superbrand Gold Award* winner for two consecutive years. After all, we're the trusted name in quality, value and durability --- decade after decade. Let's drink to that!

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SEAG CAMPAIGN

9 more added to RP Team

By June Navarro

NINE more were added to the list yesterday, making it a total of 321 athletes for the Philippine Team bound for the Kuala Lumpur Southeast Asian Games in September.

Joining them in the 8-day event on Sept. 9-17 in the Malaysian capital are 62 coaches, 16 assistant coaches, 26 team managers and 37 technical crew.

Commissioner Richie Garcia of the Philippine Sports Commission said the task force is still determining whether or not seven more hopefuls in athletics are qualified for a SEAG stint.

"The task force will decide their fate tonight (last night). But excluding basketball and athletics, this figure (321) is already final," said Garcia.

Today, SEAG chief of mission Freddie Jalasco will bring the final composition of the RP team as he enplanes to Kuala Lumpur for the chiefs of mission meeting and submits the lineup the following day.

Included in that list are the 24 cagers belonging to the men's and women's basketball teams.

Olympic boss Celso Dayrit said the move would at least save the country from a mere technicality once the international basketball federation ban is lifted.

"It's important that we submit the basketball lineup in time for the deadline of submission of entries. Once the dispute in the BAP (Basketball Association of the Philippines) is finally settled and the suspension lifted, at least we can activate the list without being questioned by the organizers," Dayrit said.

He also cited a provision in the SEAG rulebook, allowing last-minute changes in the final lineup two days before the actual games during the managers' meeting.

SEAG Final lineup

ATHLETICS

John Lozada, Eduardo Buenavista, Joebert Delicano, Sean Guevarra, Emerson Obiena, Fidel Gallenero, Allan Ballester, Roy Vence, Jimar Aing, Ernie Candelario, Daud Mama, Raphie Pilaspilas, Lerma Balauitan, Christabel Martes, Percela Molina, Roselyn Hamero, Geralyn Amondoron, Elma Muros-Posadas and Narcisa Atienza

BADMINTON—Kennie Asuncion, Kennivic Asuncion

BILLIARDS AND SNOOKERS—Efren Reyes, James Ortega, Warren Kiamco, Antonio Lining, Reynaldo Grandea, Vivancio Tanio, Lee Van Corteza, Benjamin Guevarra, Marlon Manalo

BOWLING—Ma. Liza Del Rosario, Cecilia Yap, Josephine Canare, Irene Garcia, Arianne Cerdena-Valdez, Liza Clutario, Constantine Ko King, Christian Suarez, Engelberto Rivera, Benito Dytoc, Giancarlo Mansilungan, Leonardo Rey Jr.

BOXING—Juanito Maginquian, Harry Tanamor, Violito Payla, Arlan Lerio, Larry Semillano, Romeo Brin, Reynaldo Galido, Junie Tizon, Maximino Tabangcora, Marlon Goles and Roel Laguna

CYCLING—Baby Marites Sotto Bilbit, Ruel Casaljay, Eusebio Quinones, Nilo Estayo, Villamor Baluyot, Enrique Domingo, Warren Davadilla, Merculio Ramos, Paulo Manapul, Ronald Gorantes, Alfie Catalan, Wilson Blas, Paterno Curtan, Ernesto Medina, Lloyd Reynante, Victor Espiritu, Arnel Quirimit, Joseph Oncada, Emelito Atilano, Michael Borja

EQUESTRIAN—Barba Fernando, Danielle Cojuangco, Janine Santos, Camila Zobel

FENCING—Lenita Reyes, Wilfredo Viscayno, Richard Gomez, Marinella Belgado, Emerson Segui, Rufeirino Endriano, Ma. Lorella Bauzon, Lorena San Diego, Walbert Mendoza, Edmon Velez

FOOTBALL—Merlie Acibar, Letecia Bautista, Josephine Loren, Brenda Goyagoy, Myrna Nono, Karen Octamano, Marnelli Salvador, Rosalie Padilla, Marie Moya Benitez, Sheeryn Ambrosio, Katrina De Jesus, Michaela Martinez, Rachelle Gaa, Sheila Bariobento, Therese Maungca, Maria Aleth Mendoza, Mildynamic Blando, Rachelle Delos Reyes.

GOLF—Juvic Pagunsan, Jay Bayron, Marvin Dumandan, Jesselito Saragoza, Ruby Chico, Carmelette Villaroman, Heidi Chua, Gene Bondoc, Lucinda Landicho

GYMNASTICS—Rico Ramirez, Bonnie Sy, Al Ramirez, Pia Reyes, Precious Reyes, Phoebe Espiritu, Mikaela Purugganan, Alanna Difuntorum, Anna Cruz, Angelica Basco

JUDO—Abraham Pulla, Aristotle Lucero, Melvin Magata, John Baylon, Sidney Schawrzkopf, Nancy Quillotes, Elmarie Malasan, Rezil Rosalejos

KARATEDO—Maricar Rimando, Diane Moral, Cherli Tugday; Gretchen Malalad, Marna Pabillore, Irineo Soriano, Ian George Jereos, Jerome Laplana, Khim Torres, Ryan Mariano, Jose Marie Pabillore, Peter Cardona, Junel Ong Perania, Ernesto Halili, Reiner Ryan De Leon, Emerson Luz Malolos, Noel Espinosa, Paolo Vegulilas

LAWN BALLS—Vilma Greenlees, Asuncion Bruce, Milagros Witheridge, Lilia Benthall, Luningning Kucharyski, Mario Dagpin, Alicia Knight, Leonora Rivera

PENCAK SILAT—Vigor Anot, Christopher Yabut, Espada Neru, Edwin Simacon, Ronald Perena, Abdulkarim Abad, Petzedgar Landicho, Pitzevan Landicho, Vivencio Donquez, Adzhar Abdurasad, Emma Tianchon, Juvy Jumuad, Evangeline Caguioa, Alelle Hernandez, Shelly Vivit, Angelica Rivera

ROWING—Rowell Tolentino, Mark Galvez, Nestor Cordova, Harvey Regalado, Alvin Lopez, Edgardo Maerina, Jose Rodriguez, Benjamin Tolentino, Rosalyn Tolentino, Myla Pabilonia

SAILING—Ridgely Balladares, Rommel Chavez, Clarence Tayong, Mark Francisco

BOARDSAILING—Maricel Paz, German Paz

SEPAK TAKRAW—Charlie Magtangob, Ruedas Romulo, Gene Javier, Junmar Aleta, Chiqui Dionisio, Deseree Autor, Evangeline Umoc, Eden Bernardo

SHOOTING—Gilbert Escobar, Marcelo Gonzales, Carolino Gonzales, Carlos Vincent Medina, Inocentes Dionesa, Nathaniel Padilla, Julius Valdez, Roberto Bote, Christopher Arceo, Emerito Concepcion, Darius Hizon, Pual Rosario, Danilo Castillo, Eric Ang, Jaime Recio, Patricio Bernardo, Rodolfo Martinez, Jethro Dionisio, Jose Corral, Lailani Santiago, Marilu Samaco, Rasheya Jasmine Luis, Gay Corral, Pia Tan, Susan Aguado, Therese Cantada, Ma. Lourdes Ramirez

SQUASH—Arnel Begornia, Joboy Antipala, Ricky Espinola, Edgar Balleber

TABLE TENNIS—Richard Gonzales, Jesusa Tayag

TAEKWONDO—Roberto Cruz, Tshomlee Go, Jeferthom Go, Donald Geisler, Mark Rivero, Dax Morfe, Dindo Simpao, Eva Marie Ditan, Daleen Cordero, Jasmine Strachan, Kalindi Tamayo, Veronica Domingo, Nelia Sy, Margarita Bonifacio, Sally Solis, Manuel Rivero

LAWN TENNIS—Johnny Arcilla, Joseph Victorino, Michael Mora, Czarina Mae Arevalo, Jennifer Saret, Kara Guzman

VOLLEYBALL—Jocelyn Gorosliza, Deanna Araos, Roxanne Pimentel, Sherrilyn Carrillo, Michelle Carolino, Michelle Laborte, Helen Dosdos, Marietta Carolino, Teresa Dela Rosa, Johanna Botor, Cristina Salak, Cherry Rivera

WEIGHTLIFTING—Antonio Roxas, Elie Perez, Alfonsito Aldanete, Roberto Colonia, Nicolas Jaluag, Cielo Lee, Alvinn Santos, Cecilia Atilano, Ehtel Gaugiran, Diwa Alegada

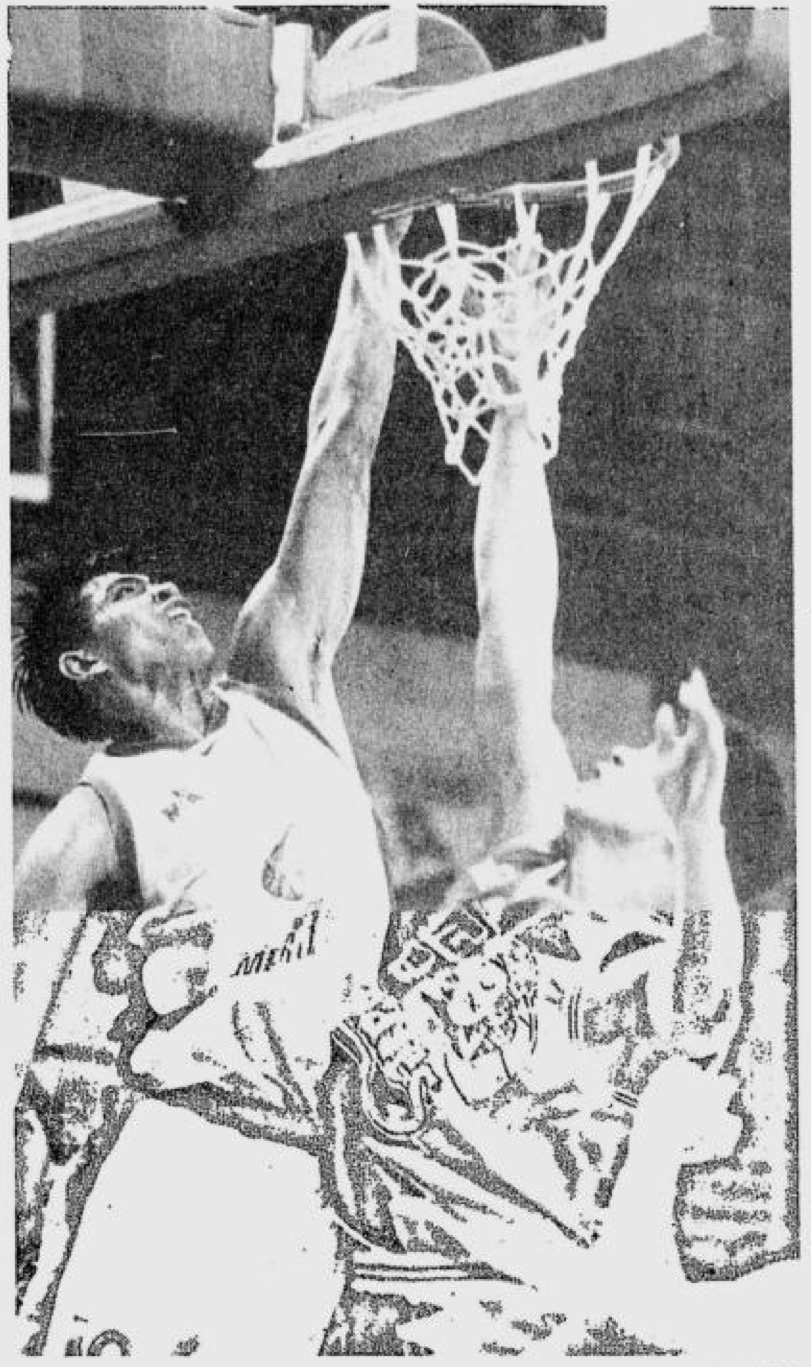
WUSHU—Rexel Nganhayna, Jerome Calica, Folayang Eduard, Marques Sanglao, Bobby Co, Mark Rosales, Willy Wang, Arvin Ting, Janice Hung, Lily So, May Lim

SWIMMING—Lynette Ang, Luica Dacanay, Mark Kalaw, Jenny Guerrero, Lizza Danila, Miguel Molina, Juan Carlo Piccio, Miguel Mendoza

DIVING—Rexel Fabriga, Zardo Domenios, Zardo Asok, Sheila Mae Perez, Cesell Domenios

WATER POLO—Abdulmobin Yacob, Joel Villa, Teodoro Canete, Antonio Antonio, Dale Evangelista, Monsuito Pelenio, Michael Jorolan, Jose Tolentino, Tani Gomez, Emilio Rafols, Allan Payawal, Jaylaula Jaitula, Ricardo Dilapdilap

ARCHERY—Syd Fraginal, Bryan Figueroa, Christian Cubilla, Marvin Cordero, Abbigail Tindugan, Purita Joy Marina, Adelina Figueroa, Jennifer Chan



ADDUCUL (left): Not going to Kuala Lumpur? FILE PHOTO

No MBA in SEA Games, says Narvasa

COMMISSIONER Ogie Narvasa of the Metropolitan Basketball Association yesterday expressed surprise over the reported submission of an MBA team selection to the Kuala Lumpur Southeast Asian Games organizers.

He said the league had disbanded the same squad that won the Southeast Asian Basketball Association (Seaba) championship.

Narvasa also said the players had been recalled by their mother squads even as he stressed the players should not be involved in the "political maneuverings" between leaders of the two Basketball Association of the Philippines factions.

"The players should not be subjected to physical and emotional stress brought about by their extra training schedules apart from their mother squads' schedules. Also, they have been caught in political crossfire that somehow affected their outlook of the national team because of this BAP leadership question," Narvasa said.

Deputy commissioner Butch Antonio said it would no longer be possible to recall the players, led by many-time national player Rommel Adducul, back to the national squad since the league would soon enter its First Phase finals.

Narvasa also said the BAP has not submitted any request for MBA players to play in Kuala Lumpur.

"I'm just surprised (with the news). But I, as commissioner of the MBA, cannot act on anything because there is nothing to act on," Narvasa said.

Narvasa also questioned the supposed list bearing names of the MBA selection and was submitted to Kuala Lumpur by BAP claimant Quintellano "Tiny" Literal.

Negros favored

GAMES TODAY
USLS Gym Bacolod City
3:00 p.m.—Negros vs Cebuana Lhuillier
Sentrum De La Salle Lipa
5:30 p.m.—LBC Batangas vs Andok's San Juan

SUDDENLY, the Negros Slashers are the outstanding favorites to beat the Cebuana Lhuillier Gems in the opener of their Metropolitan Basketball Association First Phase today.

This developed after the Gems confirmed that their main man— Matthew Mitchell—is still in the United States and won't be suiting up for the 3 p.m. game at the University of St. La Salle Gym in Bacolod City.

In effect, the Gems would have to compensate for the 6-foot-6 Mitchell's robust per game averages of 21.16 points, 13.25 rebounds, 2.27 blocks, 4.25 assists and 2.92 steals.

Richie to Rod: 'Ano'ng say mo?'

SPECTATOR

Al S. Mendoza

COMMISSIONER Richie Garcia of the Philippine Sports Commission called me up yesterday to say the budget for training and supplies of our golfers for the SEA Games will be released next week.

"The letter-request signed by Mr. Rod Feliciano on July 13 arrived in my office on July 16," he said. "We tabled it during our July 20 board meeting and it was approved. Trouble is, we receive our budget from Pagcor every 13th of the month. So, we can only give Mr. Feliciano's budget after Aug. 13. And that's next week."

Here's a glass to that, Richie.

Feliciano, president of the National Golf Association of the Philippines, has said he has advanced his money to shoulder the training and food expenses of our national golfers amounting to P100,000.

"I admire Mr. Feliciano for doing that," said Richie. "But I have actually advised Iggy (Clavecilla) to get the training equipment from Pan West on a credit basis while we await the release of our budget from Pagcor. I was told Iggy did that."

Iggy heads the NGAP's national pool and the team's training program.

To the credit of Richie, the guy has approved that both the national men and women golf teams be sent to Kuala Lumpur two weeks before the start of the SEA Games on Sept. 9.

"Their total budget for the entire package is P858,000," said Richie. "We approved that on July 20, not to include the P309,000 allotted for the two teams' budget for training and supplies."

A golfer of note himself, Richie, who was an NGAP director before he was appointed PSC commissioner during the short-lived Erap era, said he batted for the 12-day training in Kuala Lumpur for our golfers beginning Aug. 27.

"I know what a golfer needs to do," he said. "He must know the course if he wants to win."

Indeed, every golfer knows that course familiarity is the main key to victory. To the uninitiated, no two golfers are alike. Unlike basketball, badminton, volleyball, football or even boxing, one golf course is different both in size and make of another golf course. It is thus imperative that a golfer must have a first hand knowledge of a course he has to play before competition if he wants to score well—if not beat the opposition. A golfer who plays a golf course for the first time can be likened to a fisherman out to fish in an uncharted sea.

Richie also said that Rod's request for a P3-million budget for the year has been approved. Said Richie: *"Ano'ng say mo ngayon, Rod?"*

Guba, Manalastas gun for Philta semis berths

SECOND seed Johan Guba and No. 3 Carlo Manalastas gun for semifinal berths today in the boys' 18-under division of the Philta Classic 3 Age Group Championships at the Rizal Memorial Tennis Center.

Matches begin at 1 p.m. with Guba taking on No. 6 Joseph Arcilla and Manalastas facing No. 5 John Rey Moreno.

Also seeing action are fourth pick Ian de Guzman against unseeded Francis Venzon and Allan Agulto against Pius Ocampo.

Playing in the boys' 16-under quarterfinals starting at 2 p.m. are No. 1 Jandrick de Castro against Valjames Villanueva, No. 2 Irwin de Guzman against Lawrence Magaway, No. 3 Nestor Celestino Jr. against Walter Matthew Lee and No. 4 Eldridge de Castro against Renz Jon De Villa.

Shooting for quarterfinals slots in the girls' 18-under division are No. 2 Julie Ann Cadiente against Kristel Samala, No. 2 Ziaria Battad against Kris Lorraine Gumban and No. 3 Ivy de Castro against Katrina Pamintuan.

Kuerten prevails

KUERTEN

MASON, Ohio—Top-seeded Gustavo Kuerten won a marathon match over German challenger Tommy Haas in hot, humid weather Wednesday to advance in the Tennis Masters Series-Cincinnati tournament. The Brazilian star needed 1 hour, 54 minutes to defeat Haas 7-6 (4), 7-6 (8). The players had to deal with 90-degree-plus temperatures and stifling humidity that has persisted since the tournament began Monday at the ATP Tennis Center. Kuerten led five seeded players who advanced from Wednesday's play to the third round. Sixth-seeded Yevgeny Kafelnikov of Russia, No. 7 seed Tim Henman of Britain, eighth-seeded Patrick Rafter of Australia and 14th seed Goran Ivanisevic of Crontia had easier going with straight-set, no-tiebreaker wins. *AP*

Hingis, Davenport advance

HINGIS

LOS ANGELES— Top seed Martina Hingis advanced to the quarterfinals while second seed Lindsay Davenport reached the third round here Wednesday at a $565,000 WTA hardcourt event. Hingis, celebrating her 200th week atop the WTA rankings, defeated Russia's Elena Likhovtseva 6-0, 6-3 in the first third-round match.

Davenport advanced to the third round by edging Russia's Nadia Petrova 7-6 (7/3), 7-6 (7/3). Hingis, who turns 21 later this month, has not won a title in 5 1/2 months, since back-to-back crowns at Doha and Dubai. But she has reached the semifinals in 12 of her 14 tournaments this year. The Swiss star rose to 7-0 lifetime against 25-year-old Likhovtseva, including a victory in May on Italian Open clay.

Davenport, who last year's final here to fellow American Serena Williams, defeated the 19-year-old Russian last year at Miami in their only prior match. French Open runner-up Kim Clijsters, seeded third, rallied to defeat Zimbabwe's Cara Black 4-6, 6-3, 6-1. *AFP*

BASEBALL RESULTS

American League

East

	W	L	Pct	GB
New York	68	46	.596	
Boston	64	49	.566	31/2
Toronto	53	61	.465	15
Baltimore	48	67	.417	201/2
Tampa Bay	38	76	.333	30
Central				
Cleveland	64	49	.566	
Minnesota	63	50	.558	1
Chicago	56	56	.500	71/2
Detroit	48	64	.429	151/2
Kansas City	44	70	.386	20 1/2
West				
Seattle	83	31	.728	
Oakland	64	50	.561	19
Anaheim	59	55	.517	24
Texas	49	65	.430	34

National League

East

	W	L	Pct	GB
Atlanta	64	49	.566	
Philadelphia	62	51	.549	2
Florida	57	56	.504	7
New York	53	61	.465	111/2
Montreal	48	66	.421	16 1/2
Central				
Chicago	65	47	.580	
Houston	63	50	.558	21/2
St. Louis	57	55	.509	8
Milwaukee	47	64	.423	171/2
Cincinnati	47	65	.420	18
Pittsburgh	43	69	.384	22
West				
Los Angeles	65	49	.570	
Arizona	63	50	.558	11/2
San Francisco	63	51	.553	2
San Diego	54	59	.478	101/2
Colorado	46	67	.407	181/2

AMERICAN LEAGUE

Cleveland 8, Minnesota 2, 10 innings; N.Y. Yankees 16, Tampa Bay 1; Baltimore 4, Kansas City 1; Detroit 19, Texas 6; Seattle 12, Toronto 4; Oakland 6, Boston 1; Chicago White Sox 15, Anaheim 1.

NATIONAL LEAGUE

Chicago Cubs 2, Colorado 1; Houston 2, Atlanta 1, 12 innings; Arizona 7, Florida 1; Montreal 6, St. Louis 5, 11 innings; Los Angeles 9, Pittsburgh 4; Philadelphia 4, San Diego 3; Cincinnati 11, San Francisco 9; N.Y. Mets 5, Milwaukee 4. *AP*

RACING TIPS

AT SANTA ANA BY MR. 999

Race 1—1. Classy Babe 2. Chances Are 3. Chrissy Girl 4. Come in Glory 5. Enjoy D View

Race 2—1. Snake Dancer 2. Madam Aida 3. Contra Barata 4. Al's Princess 5. Grand Dragon

Race 3—1. Foreign Exchange 2. Ann's Magic 3. Duke Mark 4. Cue Artist

Race 4—1. What A Spell 2. Wire to Wire 3. Pen Tristram 4. Malaita Eagle 5. King Size

Race 5—1. Sunrise 2. Little Timothy 3. Rose in Bloom 4. Bari Bari 5. Legitimo

Race 6—1. Sis Boom Bah 2. All Grace 3. Glorious Riches 4. Summit Power 5. Perfect Nine

Race 7—1. Ikaw 2. Dona Evelyn 3. The Serpent 4. Imus Emperor 5. Batang Pier 6. Forest Dancer

Race 8—1. Silver Lining 2. Summer Dreams 3. Piker's Glory 4. Big Kahuna 5. Pride of Mandaue

Race 9—1. My Prayer 2. Hinobaan's Pride 3. Zenie's Pride 4. CJ's Pride 5. Alleviator 6. Smooth Sailing

SPORTS ON TV

COMPILED BY LORENZO MANGUIAT

GOLF: PGA - The International Highlights at 8 a.m. and 6 p.m. (r) on Star Sports

Inside the PGA Tour at 12 noon (r – 7p.m.) on Star Sports

PGA Buick Open, First Round at 10 p.m. on Star Sports

CVS Charity Classic, Day Two at 5 p.m. (r) on ESPN

LPGA Wendy's Championship for Children, Second Round tomorrow at 3 a.m. on ESPN

TENNIS: Masters Series (Cincinnati) Early Round Coverage Day #4 at 1:30 p.m. and 8 p.m. (r), Men's Quarterfinal Match tomorrow at 1 a.m. on ESPN

Weekend karting expects 3-way battle

ANOTHER three-way battle looms among Demvel's Enterprises, ARC-Tony Kart and Kart 1 when the seventh leg of the Shell Super Karting Championships reels off at the Batangas Racing Circuit in Rosario, Batangas, this weekend.

Demvel's is enjoying a commanding lead in the team competition over ARC-Tony Kart and Kart 1 with a six-leg total of 175 points in this annual event organized by the Carmona Circuit Phils. and sponsored by Shell Velocity, Shell Helix and Shell Citibank Mastercard.

ARC-Tony Kart is second with 133 points while Kart 1 is third with 131 points.

"We expect another close fight this weekend. Although Demvel's is still way ahead in the overall standings, we need to win to keep the momentum," said Demvel's coach Elson Carpio.

The battles in the individual categories are just as exciting.

Formula Super A leader Jeff Cabalinan tries to bounce back from last month's disappointing performance and keep the lead in the eight-part series also supported by Coca-Cola, Bridgestone, Nokia, Match Box/Hot Wheels, Demvel's and Eastway Racing.

Cabalinan has a six-leg aggregate 237 points, 61 points ahead of well-known Asian Formula 3 participant Pepon Marave.

Jess Garcia, who topped the previous leg also held in Batangas on July 29, and Manuel Mayo are tied for third to fourth places with 156 points.

Also expected to make their presence felt are Lee Bumgarner, Allan Uy, Jeremy Marquez, Victor Yap, Eduardo Peña, Tyson Sy and Lorenzo Rijk.

Bumgarner is favored over Mike Francisco, Bert Neuhof and Angelo Barretto in the Demvel's-sponsored Formula 125 and Rotax Challenge; Uy is picked over Mario Cunanan, Bingo Valero and Marzo Samson in the intercon; Marquez is tipped over Manuel Borja, Arvin Drueco and J.P. Carino in the FSL Light; and Yap is favored over Edgar Quesada, Tim Gosnell and Allan Pastrana in the FSL Heavy.

The awarding of trophies and cash prizes will be held immediately after the races.

For details, call Carmona Circuit Phils. at tel. 817-2241.

The overall standings:

Formula A - 1. J. Cabalinan 237; 2. P. Marave 171, 3-4 J. Garcia, M. Mayo 156; 5. M. Tanjuatco 108.

Formula 125 - 1. L. Bumgarner 203; 2. M. Francisco 181; 3. B. Neuhof 179; 4. A. Barretto 161; 5. M. Sy 138.

Intercon - 1-2. A. Uy, M. Cunanan 220; 3. B. Valero 179; 4. M. Samson 117; 5. C. Sotto 95.

Angeles rules Caltex racing

THE ANGELES City 4-Wheelers Club once again proved its mettle in off-road racing as it dominated the Luzon Selection Series of the Caltex Delo Rainforest Challenge 2001 Philippine Selection Series held recently at The Fort Bonifacio Global City in Taguig.

The off-road track's steep uphill climbs, double mud pits, and boulder obstacles proved to be easy picking for the lahar-trained Pampanga drivers as they thundered their way to garner the top nine slots in this time-trial race.

Topping the race was Roberto Manalang, who clocked a time of 2:24.20 minutes.

Egged on by the crowd, he barely stole the limelight from Dale Abenojar of the Land Rover Club. The gutsy Abenojar, with his reliable Range Rover, clocked a quick 2:31.90 minutes in the final run. He only landed 10th though in the overall standings because the point system scoring considered the qualifying runs.

Pasay City hosts 4-cock derby tonite

BIG-TIME cockers and breeders collide in another super 4-cock derby beginning at 7 tonight at Pasay City, where a whopping cash prize of P300,000 is at stake.

At least 60 quality fights are in store for aficionados, according to pit managers Oscar Gonzales, Eric dela Rosa and Butchoy Olano.

Last week, a total of 58 fights was staged.

To host the event is veteran sportsman Maj. Bobby Doromal, who invited some 30 derbyists from Araneta, Roligon, Mandaluyong, Cavite, Rizal and Batangas.

Submission of weights (1.8 kg to 2.4 kg) is today, from 7 a.m. to 2 p.m. Contact 816-6750, 843-1890 and 843-1746 for details.

Meanwhile, regular hackfights are held at PCC every Sunday, Monday, Tuesday and Wednesday.

Screening set Sept. 3

SCREENING for the BL Showdown 7-Stag National Derby on Sept. 3, 5 and 7 at the Roligon Mega Cockpit in Parañaque City will begin on Sunday, Aug. 12.

Other screenings are on Aug. 19 and 26, and Sept. 2 at the Roligon from 9 a.m. to 2 p.m.

The farm-to-farm screening, however, which started on July 27, is still going on.

To qualify for this derby sponsored by Lakpue Drug, Inc. a stag must not be older than 10 months, must have seven primary feathers, must weigh between 1.7 kg and 2.1 kg and must have a general appearance of a stag.

All entries in this derby hosted by Boy "Lechon" De Roca, Juancho Aguirre and Danny (Showdown) Ty will be categorized into Classes Y, R and M and will be matched accordingly to ensure that stags of similar ages only will fight each other.

Ty, known for his slogan "Bilis laban, bilis bayad," said all stags that passed the screening committee of Mimi Ichon and Aguirre will be accepted in all stag derbies at Roligon.

The event will be supported by the groups from Cagayan de Oro City and San Pablo City. Among them are Buchoy Ang, Momong Agudo, Boyboy Roa, Rudy Salud, Pol Estrellado, Benjie Lim, Sonny Lagon and Blandy Tolentino.

Call Danny Ty at tels. 913-2626 or 421-1275.

KAMATHI

Upset rocks world athletics meet

EDMONTON, Alberta —A fifth world title crowned a champion for all time Wednesday. Only it wasn't Haile Gebrselassie, but Lars Riedel. Kenyan Charles Kamathi scored one of the biggest upsets in world championship history, outdoing Gebrselassie's famed finishing kick in the last 150 meters of the 10,000 to leave the Ethiopian standing for the first time in his career and keeping him at four titles overall. *AP*

SPORTS

AL S. MENDOZA, Editor EDWIN M. VILLANUEVA, Assistant Editor

Ian gets inexperienced caddie

NEWPORT, Wales—Having fired a caddie who had problems counting and waking up on time, Ian Woosnam has opted for one with no experience at all. The Welshman's new caddie is a close friend, a physiotherapist named Nick Hooper who has helped Woosnam with his physical problems for the last three years. They are linking up at Celtic Manor for this week's Wales Open. *AP*

BEST-OF-7 SERIES

Red Bull out to spoil SMB party

PBA Finals will go the distance—Lang

"IT WILL be another 'Thrilla in Manila.' It will be bloody and it will go the distance," so said Red Bull import Antonio Lang about his team's title showdown against San Miguel Beer in the PBA Commissioner's Cup Finals which begins this Sunday.

Lang made the bold statement in an interview with Viva Vintage Sports which will be aired tonight (Friday, Aug. 10) as part of a two-hour primer on the finals beginning at 6 p.m. on IBC-13.

While this is Red Bull's first trip to the championship round, interviews with players and coaches from both camps reveal that the Beermen are not taking the Thunder lightly and that Red Bull may just have the right mix of youth, quickness and cockiness to give multititled San Miguel a tough fight.

The "Road to the PBA Finals" will be hosted by Noli Eala and features the most explosive and emotional highlights of the two teams' sometimes bumpy path to the championship, including the just-concluded thriller of a semifinals where both were pushed to the brink of elimination by Purefoods and Alaska.

Practically all the players like Danny Ildefonso and Danny Seigle, Davonn Harp and Jimwell Torion, had a mouthful to say about these Finals, which everyone anticipates to be even tougher than the semis.

The primer will also have a special "live" portion where fans can phone in their questions to Viva Vintage studios to a panel composed of coaches Jong Uichico and Yeng Guiao, imports Lang and Nate Johnson and other key players.

UICHICO: "It would be a different story against Red Bull."

GUIAO: "We may have a good matchup with San Miguel."

GAMES SUNDAY
(Araneta Coliseum)
4:15 p.m. — Purefoods vs Alaska
(KO for 3rd)
6:30 p.m. – San Miguel vs Red Bull
(Game 1)

By Marc Anthony Reyes

THOUGH his team is already the most successful franchise in PBA history, San Miguel Beer coach Jong Uichico admitted that there are still so many things the Beermen need to improve on.

And it took Alaska Milk to make them realize that.

For starters, nobody thought the Aces would stand a chance against the Beermen, who did not wield exceptional talent but also height and depth in their just-concluded best-of-five semifinals.

"They pushed us to the limit ," said Uichico Wednesday night after wrapping up the series at 3-2. "The two games that we lost to them are high-scoring games which are not our brand."

He said San Miguel has the tendency to veer away from their usual defense-oriented game and follow the tempo set by the opposing team. "We can't win if we try to outshoot our opponents," Uichico added.

That could spell trouble for the Beermen when they face Batang Red Bull in the finals which start Sunday, because unlike the Aces, the Thunder can match them in size, firepower and wide rotation of men.

"But it would be a different story against Red Bull," said Uichico. "Against Alaska, coach Tim (Cone) always does different things every time so you have to adjust to that right there in the game."

Uichico, however, didn't discuss Yeng Guiao's coaching style but admitted that the Thunder have undergone maturity as a team even after only five conferences in the league.

The Thunder, entering the best-of-seven finals for the first time ever, disposed of Purefoods's gritty stand in their separate semis series to continue their transformation from a mere expansion team to a championship-caliber squad.

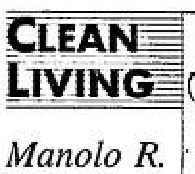
However, Guiao, who won the last of his two championship titles last 1993, remained coy about their chances, saying the Thunder will just be there to "spoil the party" for the grandslam-seeking Beermen.

Incidentally, Uichico also doesn't relish the idea that San Miguel is the overwhelming favorite in the series, saying the Thunder will be as motivated as they are and that Red Bull is also well-equipped.

"We may have a good match-up against them (SMB) man-for-man," said Guiao. "But in championships, things like experience and winning tradition can never be undermined."

Thunder and Beermen

CLEAN LIVING



Manolo R. Iñigo

ASIDE from cockfighting, basketball is my other favorite sport. In cockfighting for instance, tough-talking Jun Santiago of Thunderbird-Firefly fame is my idol while in basketball the team I like best is no-quit Batang Red Bull. I also have a soft spot for multi-titled San Miguel Beer, but between the two finalists in the interesting PBA Commissioner's Cup I'd be a hypocrite not to say that I would be cheering for newcomer Batang Red Bull on Sunday when they begin their best-of-seven title series at the Big Dome.

Mainly because my heart belongs to the underdog, just like the rest of us, the more reasons I have to root for Batang Red Bull in its dramatic bid to become the first ever franchise newcomer to win a conference title in the 26-year history of the Philippine Basketball Association. Batang Red Bull, by the way, is also aiming to score a grand slam of another kind by sweeping three sister teams in the PBA, namely Ginebra (which it beat in the quarterfinals), Purefoods (which it outclassed in the semifinals) and now San Miguel Beer.

"One cannot take Batang Red Bull lightly," said esteemed colleague Quinito Henson. "It has plenty of promise."

For his part, low-key franchise owner George Chua said, "We'll try not to disappoint the fans. We did not aspire to join this highly competitive PBA if we did not believe we have the capability to come with a team that would continue our respectable performance these fast few years and delight millions of Filipino basketball fans, particularly our loyal supporters."

On the other hand, coach Yeng Guiao said, "This modest achievement of making the finals in only our fifth conference appearance is a reflection of a lot of hard work." He added the players know each other better now and they jell pretty well.

Batang Red Bull, clearly lacking in experience, is ranged against PBA oldtimer San Miguel Beer. Since 1975, San Miguel has won 16 conference championships, including five of the last six titles under coach Jong Uichico. The defending champion San Miguel will anchor its grand slam bid this season, a feat it last won in 1989, on hardworking import Nate Johnson, deadly Danny Seigle, MVP Danny Ildefonso, Nick Belasco, Freddie Abuda, Dwight Lago and Olsen Racela.

While never-say-die Batang Red Bull will be led by all-heart Tong Lang, a Duke University standout, defensive demon Davonn Harp, cat-quick Jimwell Torion, fearless Junthy Valenzuela, sharpshooting Mick Pennisi, and former Letran teammates Kerby Raymundo and Willie Miller, who emerged "Players of the Game" in the Thunder's 87-77 rout of Purefoods last Wednesday at the Ynares Center in Antipolo City.

Ateneo rips UE, forces 3-way tie for top spot

(Araneta Coliseum)
11:30 a.m.—Ateneo vs UST (Jrs)
2:00 p.m.—Ateneo vs UST (Srs)
4:00 p.m.—La Salle vs FEU (Srs)

STANDINGS	W	L
La Salle	5	1
FEU	5	1
Ateneo	5	1
UE	3	3
NU	3	3
UST	2	4
UP	1	5
Adamson	0	6

By Dennis Eroa

FLASHY playmaker Lewis Tenorio keyed Ateneo's breakaway in the third period as the Blue Eagles clawed the University of the East, 75-60, to force a three-way tie for the lead in the UAAP men's' basketball championship at the Loyola gym.

Tenorio, a former San Beda Red Cub, sizzled with his daredevil drives and pinpoint passes as Ateneo turned a see-sawing game into a rout by posting the first of its 16-point spreads, 46-30, 5:15 remaining in the third period.

Ateneo, thus, joined defending champion La Salle and FEU on top of the eight-team cast with 5-1 win-loss card. UE dropped to 3-3, same record of National University.

As Tenorio soared, big men Enrico Villanueva and Rich Alvarez had a field day in the middle as they collared a combined 24 rebounds against the smaller Red Warriors. The 6-foot-6 Villanueva also scored 24 points, while Alvarez had 11. Tenorio had 15 points.

Earlier, the Ateneo Blue Eaglets started the day on a successful note, streaking to their fifth straight victory with a 69-64 triumph over the UE Pages.

Emerson Oreta saved the day for UST as the Tigers beat UP, 71-65. The win snapped the Tigers' three-game losing streak and improved their mark to 2-4. UP absorbed its fifth straight setback after an opening-day win over winless Adamson (0-6).

Coach Boysie Zamar alternated Jay-Ar Estrada, Jhayson Alminario and 6-foot-7 rookie Philip Butel to try and stop Villanueva to no avail. The Red Warriors were in the thick of the fight only when Olan Omiping hit his shots in the second half which ended, 35-30 in favor of the Eagles.

ATENEO 75—Villlanueva 24, Tenorio 15, Alvarez 11, Chia 6, Membrere 5, Tan Chi 4, Bugia 4, Fonacier 3, Sison 3, Elmido 0, Cruz 0.

UE 60—Artadi 15, Omiping 14, Estrada 14, Yap 7, Hubalde 6, Booker 2, Tubid 2, Ronquillo 0, Alminario 0, Butel 0, Masbang 0.

Quarters: 15-10, 35-30, 56-43, 75-60.

JRU posts sweep; Cards win

By June Navarro

ROBERTO Lagar shone from the three-point area as Mapua ended its first-round stint with an 80-71 victory over San Beda College yesterday in the NCAA basketball tournament at the Rizal Memorial Coliseum.

Silent but deadly from the outside, the 6-foot-2 Lagar drilled in three crucial treys in the homestretch as the Cardinals tied the UPHR Altas at third with identical 4-3 records.

Although those three huge triples fetched Lagar's only points in the see-saw battle, it was enough to send the Red Lions deeper into the pits at 1-6.

Jose Rizal University swept its first-round campaign with a 95-90 triumph over defending champion College of St. Benilde in the other seniors' game.

At 7-0, the Heavy Bombers equalized their feat last season while inflicting the Blazers their fifth consecutive setback for a 2-5 card.

But generally, the Cardinals played like a well-oiled machine, getting the needed numbers from slotman Steve Marucot, Edsel Feliciano and Jeffrey Martin.

They kept the Red Lions at bay with their timely snipings as the Cardinals labored throughout the roller-coaster affair.

Yet for a while, the Red Lions seemed headed for a reversal when playmaker Britt Reroma led a rally in the third quarter.

Reroma's heroics allowed the Red Lions to construct a 48-43 advantage as the Cardinals tried to regroup.

The Cardinals shifted from zone defense to man-to-man, smothering the whole Red Lions' crew in the payoff period.

MAPUA 80—Marucot 16, Feliciano 14, Martin 13, Silva 10, Lagar 9, Maneclang 5, Guevarra 4, Roxas 3, Sta. Maria 2, Dula 2, Buyco 2, Malig 0.

SAN BEDA 71—Oliveros 25, Reroma 15, Manding 11, Casio 7, Bombeo 7, Weber 2, Erestain 2, Arbole 2, Velasco 0, Cordero 0.

Marquez, Adora shine

VETERAN Genice "Bong" Marquez and Belinda Adora did the country proud by winning the gold medal in the Asia Closed-Amateur Latin contest, leading a successful Philippine campaign in the 14th Lion City International Dancesport Championships held recently in Singapore.

Marquez and Adora also placed second in the Great World City-Amateur Open and sixth in the International Dance Sport Federation Open-Amateur Latin categories. They will represent the Philippines in the World Games in Akita, Japan, on Aug. 22, according to Becky Garcia, president of the Dance Sport Council of the Philippines. Only last month, Marquez and Adora won the Latin category of the 5th Mid-year Ranking and Competition for the Alaxan Cup at the Ninoy Aquino Stadium.

Also winning in Singapore were youngsters John Erolle Melencio and Krystel Tadeo (1st place, Grade D category-Junior Latin and fourth, junior division), Joshua Yballo and Rebecca Vasaylaje (1st place, Grade D category and fourth, Pre-Am Standard), Reynier Mercado and Judith Anne Melencio (third, Grade D category-Junior Latin and seventh, Junior division), Bong Soriano-Ana Palma (sixth, Great World City-Amateur Open), Edgar Borromeo-Ana Yango (fourth, Asia Closed-Amateur Standard), and Brian Lee Calo-Edna Ledesma (third, Asia Closed-Amateur Latin).

Davao hosts Shell chess

DAVAO hosts the third regional leg of the Shell National Youth Active Chess Championship 2001 on Aug. 11-12 at the University of Mindanao-Bolton.

The annual nationwide grassroots search for emerging masters is co-sponsored by PLDT, Negros Navigation, Solid Shipping Lines and the Shell-Citibank MasterCard.

Bonafide students in the 20-and under and 14-below age brackets vie for medals, a total cash prize of P26,500 and a chance to compete in the grand national finals set this November in Metro Manila.

Local officials led by Davao City Mayor Rodrigo R. Duterte will lead participants in the tournament's opening ceremonies.

Now on its 9th year staging, the Shell-initiated annual competition has become the nation's longest-running chess tournament for non-masters. Shell National Youth Active Chess Championship has also turned up a long list of young top-caliber players and master fielded by the country in various international chess meets and festivals.

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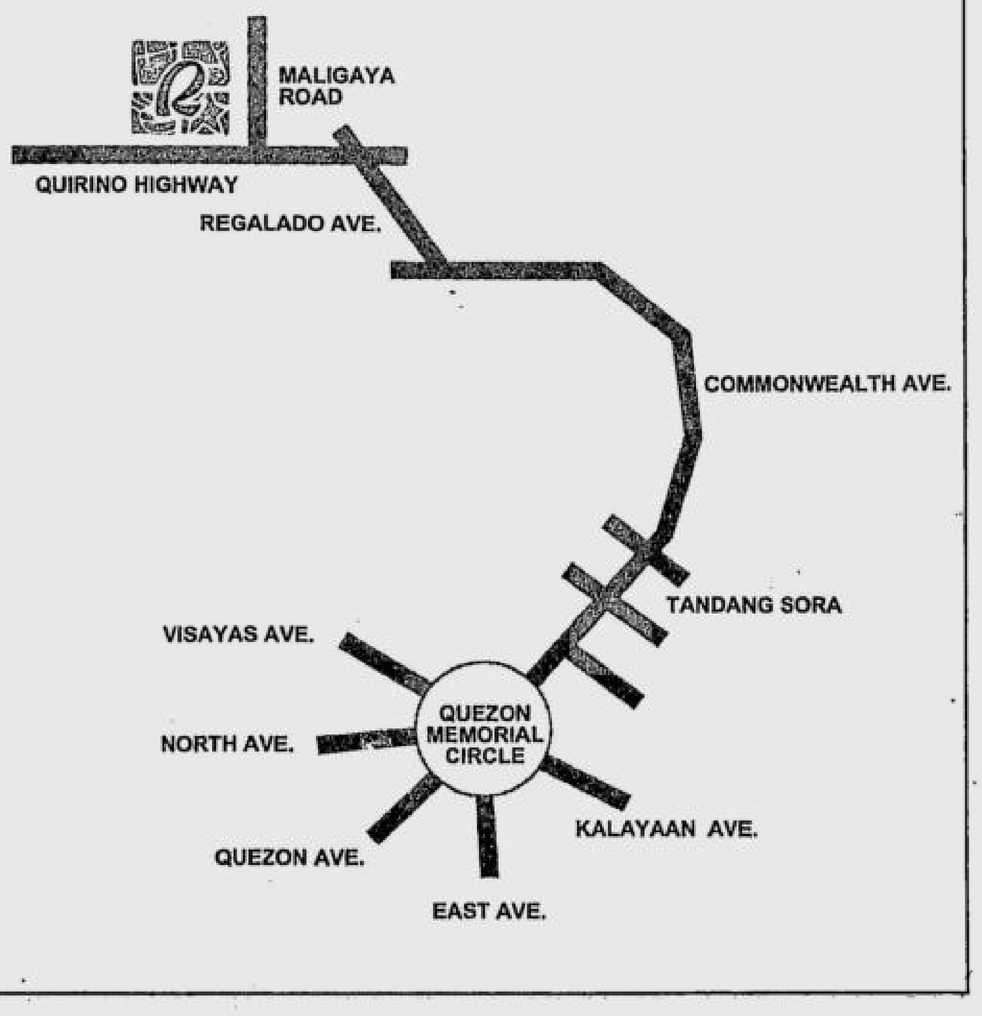

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METRO

LOUIE C. CAMINO, Editor

Bare Eye: Red Bull raging for an ambush A24

Poor folk, children triumph in Pasig rally

BY AGNES DONATO

SOME 200 poor residents along the Pasig River, backed by placard-bearing children, yesterday scored a triumph after they rallied in front of the Pasig City hall to protest the medium-rise housing project of the local government.

Pasig City Mayor Soledad Eusebio, forced into a dialogue, readily agreed to the residents' proposal for an on-site housing development program.

Juanito Capili, spokesperson of the Samahan ng mga Magkakapitbahay sa MRR (Manila Railroad)—Pineda, said his group had to stage the protest as only the mayor remained adamant in pushing for the construction of medium-rise buildings in the area.

Those who have reportedly thrown their support for the proposal of the poor residents included the Asian Development Bank, Housing and Urban Development Coordinating Council, Presidential Commission for the Urban Poor, and the National Housing Authority.

An NHA document, entitled the Pineda Socialized Housing Project Development Options, stated than an estimated P190 million would be spent for the mixed use of medium-rise housing and commercial buildings proposed by the local government, according to Capili.

But the residents opposed this, saying the project was tantamount to outright demolition of their slum dwellings.

"We fear that violent demolitions will take place again in our place if Mayor Eusebio pushed for the medium-rise housing because there will surely be strong resistance from the people who know that they will benefit from her housing project," he said.

Capili claimed that the local government had given them no assurance that they would get to occupy the tenements, as the housing project was originally meant for teachers and government employees.

Samapi members instead proposed for slum development, complete with all the amenities after President Gloria Macapagal-Arroyo visited the 2.8-hectare urban poor community last March and signed a directive declaring Pineda for socialized housing.

Capili maintained that the same NHA document showed that the estimated total project cost of the residents' proposed plan was only P35 million.

In yesterday's rally, children brought placards and a miniature model of the people's housing plan and presented them to Mayor Eusebio.

Hopeless and sick, 2 men kill selves

TWO ailing men, an 80-year-old grandfather and a 31-year-old father, took their lives Wednesday in Caloocan City and Navotas.

Manuel Labana, 80, was found by his wife Milagros hanging inside their house on Leongson Extension, San Roque, Navotas about 6 p.m., police said.

Labana used a nylon cord to kill himself.

Investigators said the victim could not stand a nagging illness and he decided to commit suicide to end his sufferings. The ailment was not specified.

In Caloocan, Angelito Monosan used a nylon cord to hang himself inside his house on San Marcos Street, Tambakan, Maypajo, police said.

Before the suicide, relatives told investigators that the victim appeared very depressed since he was suffering from advanced tuberculosis.

Monosan also lost his job months earlier, police said. *Christian Esguerra*

JV declares war against MMDA

BY AGNES E. DONATO

SAN JUAN Mayor Joseph Victor Ejercito yesterday hit the Metropolitan Manila Development Authority for allegedly refusing to collect his town's garbage because he has been vocal about his support for the abolition of the MMDA.

Ejercito claimed he has not seen "any concrete effort" from the current MMDA administration to provide a dumpsite for Metro Manila's garbage.

"If we have a chairman who cannot act on the promises he delivered (when he assumed office), there is no better way to address the concern but to eradicate a non-performing office," Ejercito said.

But MMDA Chair Benjamin Abalos Sr, denied Ejercito's charges and urged him to communicate with the MMDA, so "he would know what we are doing."

"How would he know this when he would not attend or even send a representative to our meetings?" Abalos asked.

"I have always respected his position because I thought he wanted to run San Juan by himself," Abalos said. "But now that this has come out, I will speak to him and cite all the areas where he could dump his town's garbage."

Councilor Rolando Bernardo, chair of the San Juan Municipal Solid Waste Management, said that their town's garbage trucks were not able to make the rounds last Friday because they were still full of trash previously collected.

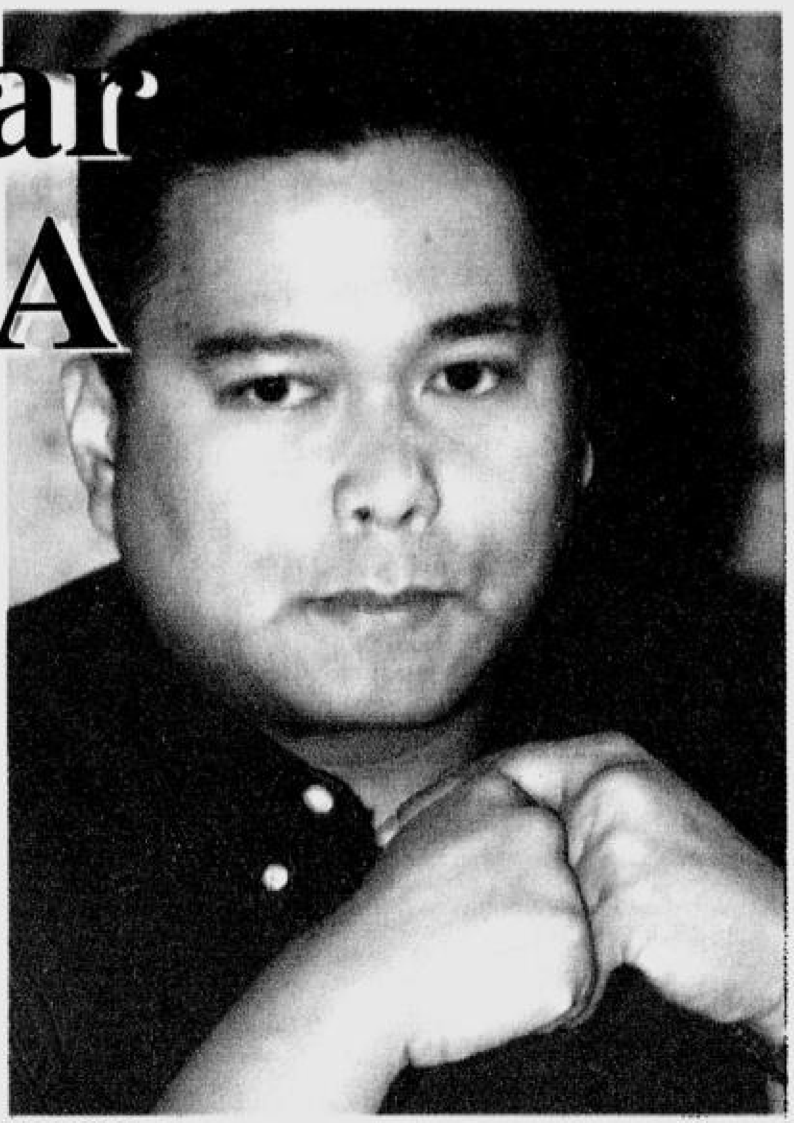
"Residents have been complaining of uncollected garbage in the municipality," Bernardo said. "Much as we want to collect them, we cannot because all our trucks are still loaded with last week's collection."

He blamed this on the MMDA, which had allegedly failed to provide a dumpsite for San Juan and other cities in Metro Manila.

Ejercito also said San Juan does not have a transfer station at the moment because the municipal government has ruled against the dumping of trash in the station at the Pinaglabanan Shrine.

He however questioned how the MMDA could purportedly provide a dumpsite for Mandaluyong City, Abalos' hometown.

"The bias is very clear," Ejercito said. "If this goes on, I suggest they just rename MMDA into Metro Mandaluyong Development Authority."



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Family that killed break-in robber liable for homicide

By PHILIP C. TUBEZA

AFTER successfully defending their home from a suspected Akyat-Bahay gang member, a family in Quezon City faces another threat.

Retired merchant marine captain Rafael Torres, 69, and his wife Anita, 46, both of No. 58 Sampaguita St. Maligaya Subdivision, Novaliches, Quezon City, face homicide charges after they killed the unidentified burglar, said Senior Insp. Rudy Jaraza, Central Police District-Criminal Investigation-Homicide Section chief.

He explained that the filing of charges was "routine" since it would be up to the Quezon City Prosecutor's Office to determine if the couple had killed the unidentified burglar in self-defense.

"You just can't kill anybody who enters your home," Jaraza said.

But Jaraza added that charges would be filed only when a relative of the thief comes forward and identifies the thief.

The suspect, a male, around 5-foot-7 in height, barefoot, and wearing a black shirt and *maong* pants, remained unidentified as of yesterday afternoon.

He also had a tattoo of a rose on his left chest, said investigator SPO1 Cresencio C. Bajao.

The couple and their son Rafael Christopher, 29, ganged up on the trespasser when they caught him inside their house before dawn Tuesday.

Police recovered a cal. .38 revolver from the dead suspect, who was still clutching the gun when investigators arrived.

METROWATCH

Vendor killed with own knife

VENDOR Roel D. Macandili, 23, died by the knife he tried to kill a certain "Joseph" with after an argument in Quezon City. Macandili, of Block 17, Lot 89 Erap City, Montalban, Rizal, was on his way home about 7:40 p.m. on Wednesday when he came to blows with Joseph over a bad joke at the Murphy Public Market. PO3 Leo Tabuena, of the Central Police District-Criminal Investigation Unit, said Macandili left but returned a few minutes later with a knife and tried to stab Joseph, who managed to grab the weapon and stab Macandili with it three times. Macandili was declared dead on arrival at 8:10 p.m. at the Labor Hospital, police said. *Philip Tubeza*

Cell phone thief falls

SUSPECTED holdup man Emilio Cañete, 31, on Wednesday tried to shoot two Western Police District Station 11 policemen who arrested him for robbing salesman Christopher Sy of his cell phone and then shooting him on July 28 in Binondo, Manila. But with Cañete's description provided by witnesses, police tracked down the suspect and found on him a .38 Armscor revolver with eight live bullets. Cañete was charged only with illegal possession of firearm as Sy's father refused to press charges, saying his son was already safe and his P5,000 worth cell phone has been recovered. *Jerome Aning*

Man stabbed dead

POLICE arrested Michael Lugo, 18, Topet Bakulo, 20, Arlito Merlosa, 32, Sonny Camilla, 22, and Roberto Vergara, 21, after they figured in a brawl where Ferdinand Labrador, 20, of Maybunga, Floodway in Pasig City, died from 17 stab wounds on Wednesday night. Labrador's companions—Jeffrey Ebol, 19, and Joselito de Jesus, 20, both of Lakas Bisig, Cainta, Rizal—also suffered stab wounds in different parts of the body. Police said the victims were walking on F. Legaspi Street in Pasig when the suspects chanced upon them. The victims and the suspects, police said, had just come from the same drinking spree in a wedding celebration. But police are still trying to determine if the two groups had a previous misunderstanding that triggered the brawl. Police also found on the suspects a samurai sword which Merlosa allegedly used to attack the victims. The suspects, now detained at the Pasig police station, face charges of homicide and frustrated homicide. *Agnes Donato*

15 men charged in Uratex kidnap

By ANDREA TRINIDAD-ECHAVEZ

POLICE yesterday lodged criminal charges against 15 men accused of abducting three persons, including the granddaughter of Uratex owner Robert Cheng, inside the University of the Philippines campus in Diliman, Quezon City last June.

The Central Police District filed the charges before the Quezon City Prosecutors Office.

Charged were Frederick Valencia, alleged leader of the kidnap-for-ransom group, Renny Ibus, Ronie Selos, Rannie Valencia, Domingo Asuncion, Jimmy Asuncion, Rolly Sarabia, Ronald Sejalbo, a certain "Bernie," "Louie," "Boy Muslim," and four other John Does.

All the suspects are still at large, police said.

Quezon City investigators gathered the kidnappers' identities from Joel Guillermo, an alleged member of the kidnap-for-ransom gang who surrendered to authorities on July 31.

Police did not say what prompted Guillermo to yield.

The kidnapping of Mary Cheng Ragasa, Cheng's granddaughter, Dionisio Burca and Cheng's family driver Valentin Torres, hit the headlines in June when President Macapagal-Arroyo claimed the incident was staged as part of the opposition's plot to destabilize her government.

Robert Cheng is said to be a close friend of Senator Panfilo Lacson, former PNP chief, according to police intelligence.

Police alleged Cheng connived with the opposition to discredit the Macapagal administration.

The Cheng family, supported by the Filipino-Chinese community, strongly condemned the allegations, prompting the President to issue a public apology to the Cheng family.

Ragasa, Burca and Torres were abducted on June 18 inside the UP Diliman campus.

The victims were onboard a maroon Mercedes Benz (TMP-898) when the suspects blocked their path along Osmeña Avenue in front of Malcolm Hall, UP Law Center.

Four armed men in police uniform forcibly dragged them out of the car and shoved them in an off-white Mitsubishi Adventure.

The suspects initially asked the Cheng family P20 million in ransom, they later scaled down their demand to P5 million, police said.

Businessman loses car

BUSINESSMAN Richard Dalao, 48, lost his Honda Civic with Plate No. UUW 371 to car thieves on Wednesday, while it was parked in front of his house on 9638 Pililia St. in Barangay Valenzuela, Makati City. Dalao told police he discovered the loss at about 6 a.m. while he was getting ready to go to work.

Police said they are currently making follow-up operations to recover Dalao's car, which police believe was taken to Pasay City to be cannibalized. *Nelson Flores*

Red Bull raging for an ambush

BARE EYE

Recah Trinidad

THERE are nights when the San Miguel Beer team, a thoroughbred, would run a race like a shaky native rig puller. These are times when the classy squad would play like sister team Ginebra, loose, out of focus, or even worse.

One bad night for the Beermen, no doubt, could result in a big celebration for a lot of other fans out there in the PBA.

Why? Because the unexpected, or upsets as they are popularly called, are the main spice of sporting tournaments.

Nothing creates a bigger wave out there in the sporting field than the defeat or slip of established stars.

***

Take the case of world sprint queen Marion Jones who was beaten by a Ukrainian rival in the international athletics championships in Edmonton, Canada. There were more than a bundle of memorable gold-medal feats in the competition among the world's best but the fall of Jones readily hogged the headlines.

Asked the Associated Press: "Has the world caught up to Marion Jones? Is she slowing down?

There next came ready suggestions that Jones, who has dominated the sprint world, is no longer the runner she used to be.

Yes, there were also nights when San Miguel would be accused of not playing like the super team that it is supposed to be.

And these are nights when everybody, including team owner Danding Cojuangco, could only wonder why.

Told last week that San Miguel, after leveling the best-of-5 series against Alaska, was inexorably headed for the championship, Cojuangco shook his head and exclaimed: "No, no, *malayong-malayo pa 'yan*."

***

San Miguel's loss to Alaska on Sunday only showed how sharply Cojuangco plays his cards.

In a way, that San Mig loss that forced a do-or-die for a finals slot in the PBA Commissioner's Cup series had served its purpose.

OK. The slip by the favored side may not be as monumental as the fall of Marion Jones.

But, mind you, Alaska's big win on Sunday had in a way provided us momentary respite from all the noisy, childish quarrels among self-styled national leaders.

***

Now, this is not to say San Miguel must allow itself to be upset more often to provide needed joy to the poor *masa*, definitely the base of our national basketball population.

No philanthropist in his right mind, no matter how rich and generous, would dare risk a major national championship just to feed the whims of the general public.

And true enough, San Miguel, with the Big Boss again in attendance, played true to form to bag one of two PBA Commissioner's Cup finals slot by drubbing decimated but ambitious Alaska on Wednesday.

Dave Coros, reporting for the Manila Bulletin, put it aptly when he wrote that all the Beermen needed was one sumptuous scoring stretch to pull away for good.

Coros did try to work his sleek prose to render an exciting result. But, in the end, he reluctantly conceded that, on the whole, the game was nothing more than a mismatch.

***

It was clear the Beermen had left so much to chance in its semifinals race against the Alaska Aces.

Now, the question is: Can San Miguel afford to play hot and cold during the best-of-7 championship series that starts on Sunday?

Look, if San Miguel had allowed itself to self-destruct against Alaska in the semis, it cannot afford a similar lapse against Red Bull which, man for man, appears a very worthy title contender.

By a plain look, the San Miguel Beermen could indeed appear superior, even seven or 10 points better than the Red Bull Thunders.

But expect tons of intangibles, which could offset ready manpower advantage, to rule the championship.

San Miguel, in short, cannot afford to lie back and leave the flanks. It must avoid Ginebra's cute but defenseless run-run game.

For example, San Miguel cannot blink and drop the championship series opening as it had been wont to do in previous outings.

One mistake and the Thunders, definitely a lot hungrier, will be there to spring an unforgiving ambush.

China trade fair opens today

THE 9TH China Industrial Trade Fair will open today at the Philippine Trade Training Center on Roxas Boulevard. Various Chinese products, including HELI, the first Chinese-made forklift truck using advanced Japanese technology, will be displayed in the fair which runs until Aug. 14. The forklift is manufactured by Anhui Heli Forklift Truck Group (AFG) based in Anhui, China.

Manifesto of Support for Coop-NATCCO

It has been reported that the Commission on Elections (COMELEC), in its Partial Compliance Report to the Supreme Court, included the Cooperative NATCCO Network Party (Coop-NATCCO) among the party-list groups that should be disqualified. We cannot understand this, and we call on the Commission on Elections (COMELEC) to immediately redress this grievous error. The Court defined the guidelines for the party-list candidates in its June 26, 2001 decision.

The Supreme Court said:	We say:
1. The party-list group should represent the underrepresented and marginalized sectors of our society - "majority of its membership should belong to the marginalized and under-represented. And it must demonstrate that in a conflict of interests, it has chosen or is likely to choose the interest of such sectors".	Coop-NATCCO's membership is composed of farmers and fisherfolk, salary and wage earners, self-employed, housekeepers, students and others. In the 11th Congress, Coop-NATCCO advanced and supported various causes and bills of the marginalized and under-represented sectors such as the recovery of the coconut levy funds, the amendment of the Cooperative Code, safeguarding the rights of seasonal farm workers under CARP and others.
2. The party-list candidate should not represent any religious group.	Coop-NATCCO clearly has no religious affiliation nor does it represent any religious group. It adheres to the International Cooperative Alliance principle of religious neutrality.
3. The party-list organization "must not be an adjunct of, or a project organized or an entity funded or assisted by, the government".	Coop-NATCCO has never been and will never be an adjunct of government. We know that the relations between Coop-NATCCO and the Cooperative Development Authority (CDA) have been strained, to put it mildly. This is apparently because of Coop-NATCCO's effort to amend the CDA Charter. Coop-NATCCO has also never received funding from the government. Like other duly elected party-list groups and congresspersons, Coop-NATCCO was able to endorse/identify projects for the benefit of its constituency. Coop-NATCCO itself did not receive any of these funds allocated by Congress.
4. The party-list candidate and its nominees should not have any of the disqualifications under the Party-List Law.	Coop-NATCCO and its nominees qualify under the Party-List Law. It has in fact already served a full three year term in the last Congress.
5. The party-list candidate should have the ability to formulate and enact legislation.	Coop-NATCCO authored more than 25 bills and resolutions in the 11th Congress and co-authored more than 90 other measures. Several of these bills were passed into law. Five of its priority bills were also approved on third and final reading by the House.

And so we say, why disqualify Coop-NATCCO? We see no reason for this. It would be a grave injustice to Coop-NATCCO and to all marginalized and under-represented sectors if Coop-NATCCO would not be allowed to take its rightful seat in Congress.

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3 (DTS)	BRIDGET JONE'S DIARY
4	CATS & DOGS

Cinemagix
(Urdaneta) tel(075) 568.6771

1	RED DIARIES
2	JURASSIC PARK 3
3	SOON TO OPEN
4	SOON TO OPEN

Lianas Cinema
(Alabang) tel 850.1276

1 (SDDS)	THE ANIMAL
2	DUDURUGIN KO . .
3	RED DIARIES
4 (DTS)	9 ½ WEEKS

Lianas MovieCity
(Calamba) tel (049) 545.7202

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2	RADYO
3 (DTS)	CATS & DOGS
4	BRIDGET JONE'S DIARY
5	NAG AAPOY NA LANGIT

Olivarez Tri-Cinema
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Morales Cinema
(Biñan) tel (049) 511.9736

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2	CATS & DOGS
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Cabuyao
(Laguna City) tel (049) 531.4808

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2 (DTS)	RESERVE

Fourstep
(Cavite) tel (046) 416.2385

1	KISS OF THE DRAGON

Emperor
(Rosario Cavite) tel (046) 438.1657

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2	RADYO
3	RED DIARIES

Fiesta World Mall
(Lipa) tel (043) 981.0790

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2	CATS & DOGS
3	ALONG CAME A SPIDER
4	MOULIN ROUGE

Jade Cinema
(Angeles City) tel (045) 887.5001 to 03

1 (DOLBY EX)	KISS OF THE DRAGON
2	DRIVEN
3	DR. T & THE WOMEN
4 (DTS EX)	CATS & DOGS

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5	THE ANIMAL
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7	RED DIARIES
8	BRIDGET JONE'S DIARY
9	RADYO
10	MOULIN ROUGE

ERMITA
536-7809 TO 12

1	BRIDGET JONE'S DIARY
2	CATS & DOGS
3	MOULIN ROUGE
4	RADYO
5	RED DIARIES
6	THE ANIMAL
7	KISS OF THE DRAGON

NOVALICHES
935-3229 TO 31

1	BRIDGET JONE'S DIARY
2	THE ANIMAL
3	JURASSIC PARK 3
4	KISS OF THE DRAGON
5	RED DIARIES
6	UNDER REGULAR CHECK UP
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8	UNDER REGULAR CHECK UP

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3	THE ANIMAL
4	BRIDGET JONE'S DIARY
5	JURASSIC PARK 3
6	RED DIARIES

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ALI MALL CINEPLEX-2	RADYO
ALI MALL CINEPLEX-3 (DDS)	THE ANIMAL
ALI MALL CINEPLEX-4 (SDDS)	KISS OF THE DRAGON
ALI MALL CINEPLEX-5 (DTS)	JURASSIC PARK 3
ALI MALL CINEPLEX-6 (DOLBY)	CATS & DOGS
ALI MALL CINEPLEX-7(DOLBY)	BRIDGET JONE'S DIARY
FARMERS PLAZA-1(DOLBY)	RADYO
FARMERS PLAZA-2(DOLBY)	DUDURUGIN KO PATI BUTO MO
FIESTA CARNIVAL	CLOSED FOR RENOVATION
NEW FRONTIER	CLOSED FOR RENOVATION

MANILA

EASTERN	
MAXIM	CLOSED
MIRAMAR	GATAS / TEMPTATION NIGHT
ODEON	RADYO
ODEON-2	KISS OF THE DRAGON
ROBEN	DUDURUGIN KO PATI BUTO MO
TANDEM-1	NAG AAPOY NA LANGIT
TANDEM-2	HILIG NG KATAWAN
TIMES	TRAFFIC / CAST AWAY

QUEZON CITY

ACT-1	SENSUAL ISLAND
ACT-2	KAYA KO PERO MASAKIT
ACT-3	CLOSED
ACT-4	CLOSED
CORONET-2	DUDURUGIN KO PATI BUTO MO
QUEZON-1	AMORSEKO
REMAR	RADYO
REMAR-2	KISS OF THE DRAGON

CUBAO

OCEAN SUPERAMA	BABAENG PUTIK
OCEAN CINEMA-A	PANABLA
OCEAN CINEMA-B	CRISELDA

MANDALUYONG CITY

SHANGRI-LA PLAZA MALL	635-20-79 / 633-78-51 TO 70
CINEMA-1	THE ANIMAL
CINEMA-2	BRIDGIT JONE'S DIARY

CAINTA RIZAL

STA. LUCIA EAST	(681-5401 TO 19)
CINEMA-1	DUDURUGIN KO PATI BUTO MO
CINEMA-2	RED DIARIES
CINEMA-3	ACCIDENTAL SPY
CINEMA-4 (DOLBY DIGITAL)	CATS & DOGS
CINEMA-5 (DTS)	JURASSIC PARK 3
CINEMA-6	NAG AAPOY NA LANGIT
CINEMA-7	RED DIARIES
CINEMA-8	PANGAKO IKAW LANG
CINEMA-9 (DTS)	JURASSIC PARK 3
CINEMA-10 (DOLBY DIGITAL)	BRIDGET JONE'S DIARY
CINEMA-11(SDDS)	KISS OF THE DRAGON
CINEMA-12	MOULIN ROUGE
CINEMA-14	THE ANIMAL
CINEMA-15	RADYO

LORES

CINEMA-2	CLOSED
CINEMA-3	CLOSED

POWER PLANT CINEMA

CINEMA-1	CATS & DOGS
CINEMA-2	MOULIN ROUGE
CINEMA-3	THE ANIMAL
CINEMA-4	KISS OF THE DRAGON
CINEMA-5	JURASSIC PARK 3
CINFMA-6	BRIDGET JONE'S DIARY

UNIWIDE METROMALL

(LAS PINAS)	
CINEMA-1	RESERVE
CINEMA-2	RESERVE
CINEMA-4	RESERVE

UNIWIDE COASTAL MALL

(PARANAQUE)	
CINEMA-1	UNDER COVER ANGEL
CINEMA-2	SUGAT SA PURI
CINEMA-4	WARAY

Get a chance to watch Lea in LA musical

BAYO, the country's premiere chain of fashion wear for ladies, has recently chosen Lea Salonga to be its image model. Modern, multi-talented and independent, Lea matches Bayo's clothes which exemplify a combination of beauty and grace, designed exactly for the successful and career-oriented Filipina of today.

Beyond fashion and unknown to many Filipinos, Lea is also preparing for yet another musical, set to open in Los Angeles this October.

"The Flower Drum Song" is the latest adaptation of Rodgers and Harmmerstein's classic play which was released as a full-length movie in 1961. The play follows the story of a young Chinese immigrant who sets off to the US in search of the proverbial American dream.

Avid fans of Lea Salonga can have a once-in-a-lifetime chance to see her perform live, with Bayo's latest promo, "Visit Lea."

The ongoing raffle promo which runs until Oct. 15, entitles shoppers to one raffle coupon for every P500 purchase of Bayo products.

Instant prizes from sponsors will also be given away like cool Pela watches from Casio, plus great gift packs from Odyssey Records and Pantene.

The grand prize winner gets an all-expense paid trip for two to Los Angeles, courtesy of Japan Airlines to watch Lea Salonga perform live in "The Flower Drum Song."

This is Bayo's own little way of thanking their loyal customers who have supported them through the years that they have been in the business.

Parents . . .

(From page A26)

shouldn't feel threatened that Josh also loves his dad. It was a natural reaction though for me to feel resentful of the fact that as much of a role I play in my son's life, he still craves for his dad in his life.

I closed my interview with Christopher by saying we are never given the children we deserve. They exceed all that we can ever hope to be because of their ability to love us and forgive us for all our shortcomings. The best that we as parents can do is to strive to be better people, better parents. To be worthy of kids like Christopher, and may I now add, to be worthy of Josh.

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6:55 PM
9:05 PM

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ENTERTAINMENT

LOUIE C. CAMINO, Editor

Parents should strive to be better people to be worthy of their kids' love

KRIS AND TELL

Kris Aquino

JOSH and I are happily settled in my mom's house. We've hired a male nurse to look out for him in the next few weeks while he recovers.

Josh weighs more than 80 pounds and it's difficult for me and the yayas to support his bulk. His right thigh is still very swollen, and the skin around where I assume his thigh absorbed the most impact has been breaking because of the extreme stretching and it bleeds every now and then.

Over-all he's been a good patient, but he's been suffering from separation anxiety, so Josh insists on joining me in all my tapings.

Thankfully, the ABS CBN dressing room is very comfortable, but during location shoots Josh gets restless especially when it's warm, yet when I tell him the car can take him home, he refuses. If it gives him a level of reassurance to have me in proximity at all times, then for the next few weeks, so be it.

Last Sunday on "The Buzz," we had **Christopher Roxas** and his long estranged French father, **Andre Sommereux** as our guests. Two days later, Christopher gave me a follow up interview on "Kris and Tell."

Christopher is now 22. When he was 7, his French father and Filipina mother parted ways. His mom could no longer accept his father's affair. She'd had enough and wanted out.

His father drifted in and out of their lives. Because the dad was employed in the hotel industry and was constantly travelling around Asia, the visit dwindled until they lost all forms of communication.

Christopher needed to renew his French passport. He left his contact numbers with a consul's secretary, just in case his dad was ever in the Embassy.

At almost the same time, his dad was also renewing his passport. Andre waited nearly a month before calling Christopher, since he was scheduled to be in China immediately after he'd gotten his passport.

Andre said that another month in 15 years wouldn't make such a big difference.

He sent a text message to his son and Christopher immediately called up his father. They arranged to meet each other in a Metro Manila mall.

Christopher said he initially wanted to show his dad he was already a grown up, so he first offered to shake hands. After a few seconds, he realized what he most wanted to do was hug his dad. When he did, he said he'd never felt as complete, like he was whole again.

I asked Christopher if there was any bitterness in his heart towards his dad, for having left him and his younger sister. He said there was none left now that his dad is back.

I also asked him if he was mad at his mom for giving up on his dad and ending their union. When he was younger, Christopher remembered during a fight with his mom that he had shouted at her the words, *"Kasalanan ko bang wala akong tatay?"* Now that he has matured, he has realized his mom and dad were not meant to stay together.

For nearly 10 years he has had a loving stepdad. He took on the responsibility of caring for Christopher and his sister. Even when his mom was working in Japan, his stepdad was a constant presence in their lives.

Christopher said, *"Ang* mom *ko, di siya talaga para sa* dad *ko. 'Yung* stepdad *ko, dun siya lumigaya, 'yun talagang nagmahal sa kanya."*

In a reversal of roles today, Christopher has been the one spoiling his dad, treating him to meals in restaurants, outfitting him with shirts from his clothing sponsor, taking his dad out to play billiards and have a few beers with his *barkada*.

He's been proudly introducing his dad to everybody. What matters to him is that he and his dad are part of each other's lives again. He's taught himself to forget the pain of the years they were apart.

I write about this now because I am still sometimes guilty of being selfish about Josh's love. When we went to Baclaran to pray the other night, my son got a call from his dad on Yaya Ana's cellphone. Josh started singing his favorite children's songs with his dad. I was eavesdropping and heard him say "I'm okay dada and I love you dada."

Josh was smiling the entire time and kept saying, "Please dada, one more time."

After his dad hung up, Josh kept clutching the cell phone and kissing it. My feelings were hurt because I felt that I was the one he was always with, and I felt that I gave so much, and yet a simple phone call could make him just as happy.

I was the one who was angry at the fact that prior to Josh's accident, it had been a couple of months since he and his dad even talked on the phone, but all that seemed to have been forgotten. Whereas when I have a night off and I catch a movie with my friends, Josh cries at our doorstep and gives me the most *pa*-guilty look, almost as if I were abandoning him.

On our way home, when the car went under the Mandaluyong underpass, I asked Josh if he wanted to go live with his Dada since it seemed he loved him more than me. I told him I could drop him off. Josh must have felt my *tampo* because he hugged and kissed me and said "Mama only. I love mama. *Kuya* Ipe *nasa* States."

Great solution, Josh shipped his dad back to America to spare his mom of anymore jealous feelings. And he called him *Kuya* Ipe. Wise move, Josh.

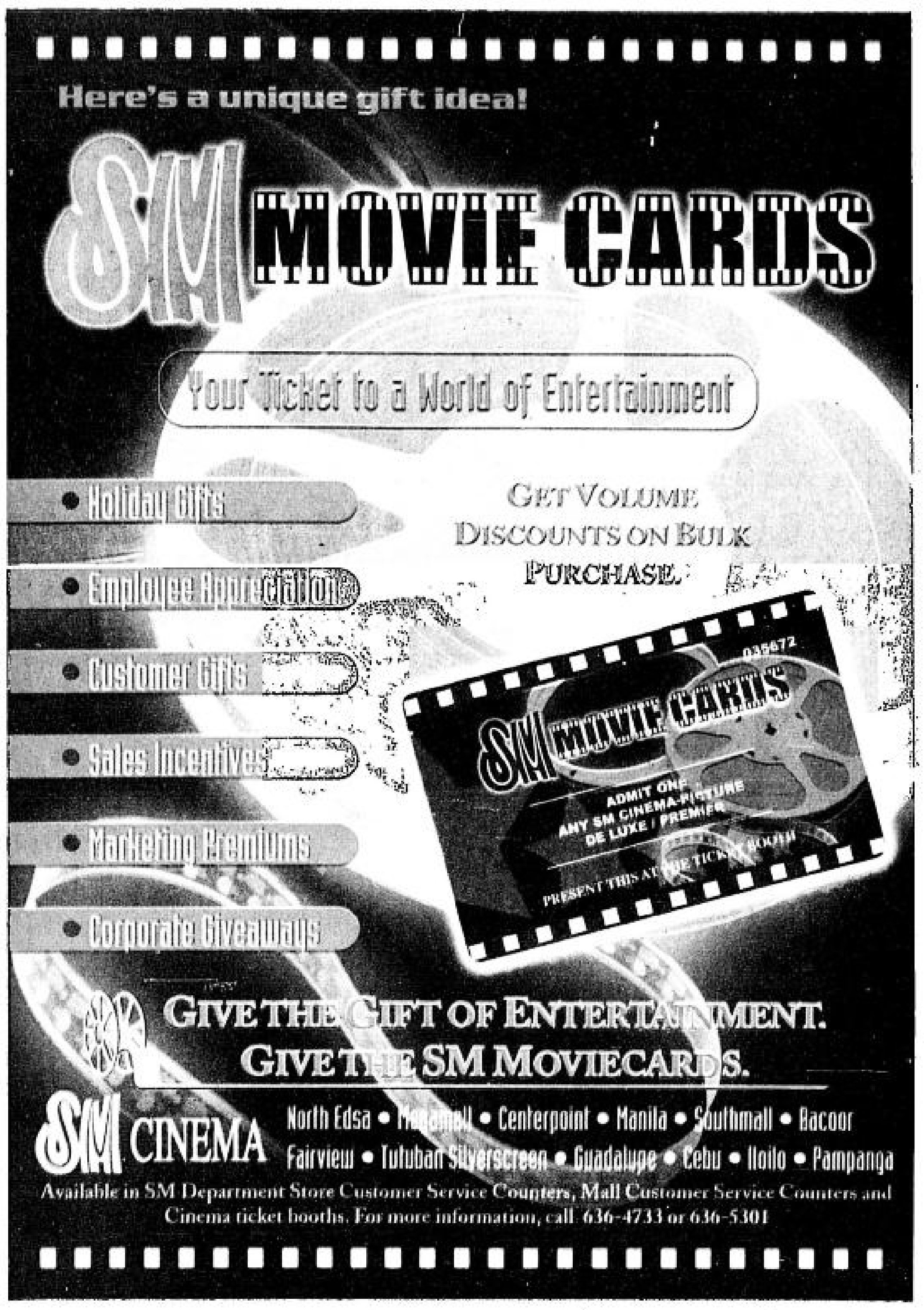
Okay, I know I was childish and I

PARENTS/ A25

POWER PLANT
CINEMA
Rockwell Center, Makati City ☎ Tel. No: 8981440-41 DOLBY DIGITAL SURROUND-EX

CATS & DOGS - GP 12:50, 3:00, 5:10, 7:20, 9:30	MOULIN ROUGE - P 13 11:00, 1:20, 3:45, 6:10, 8:35, 11:00	THE ANIMAL - P 13 11:15, 1:20, 3:25, 5:30, 7:35, 9:40
KISS OF THE DRAGON - R 18 12:50, 3:05, 5:20, 7:35, 10:00	JURASSIC PARK 3 - P 13 11:25, 1:30, 3:35, 5:40, 7:45, 9:50	BRIDGET JONE'S DIARY - P 13 11:20, 1:30, 3:40, 5:50, 8:00, 10:10, 11:20

Matinee: P80, Mon.-Fri, 11:10 am to 4:45 pm Screenings, Free Seating.



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However, Cinemas 5 & 6 will be OPEN the whole day. from 10:15 A.M. to LFS (Last Full Show).
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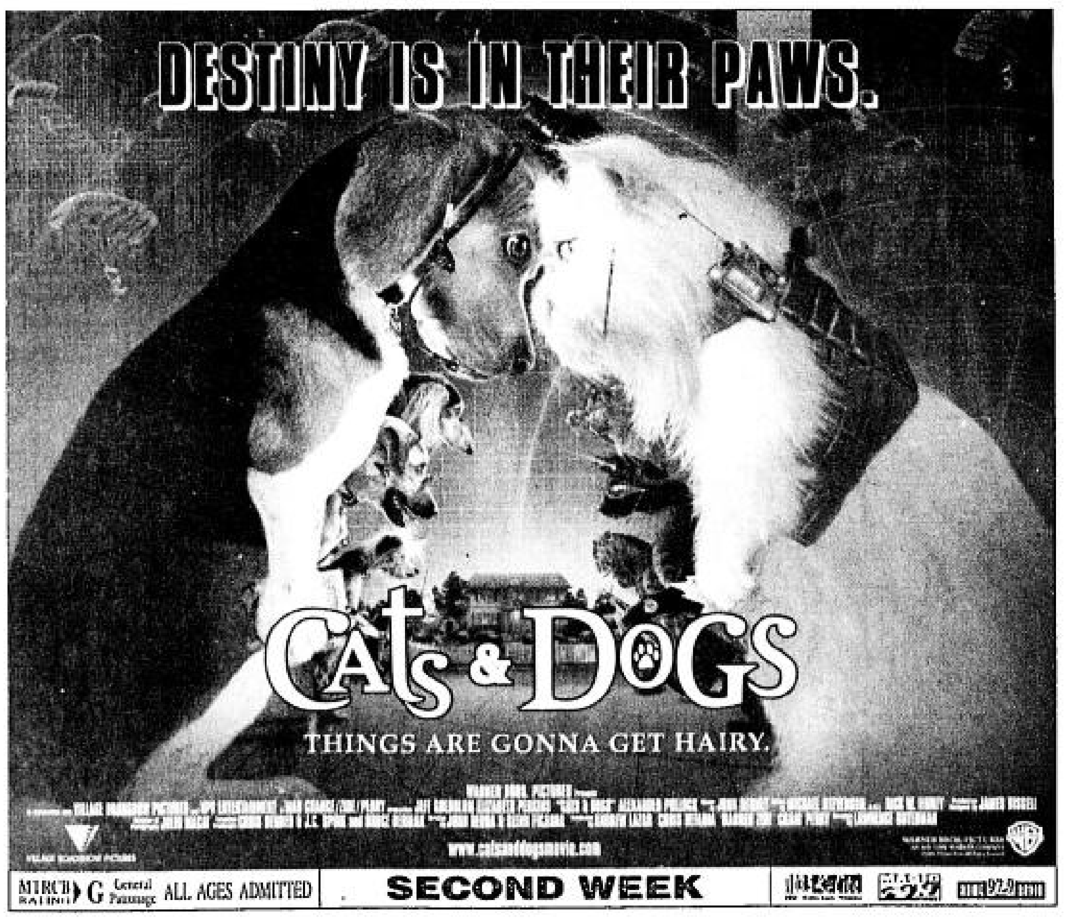

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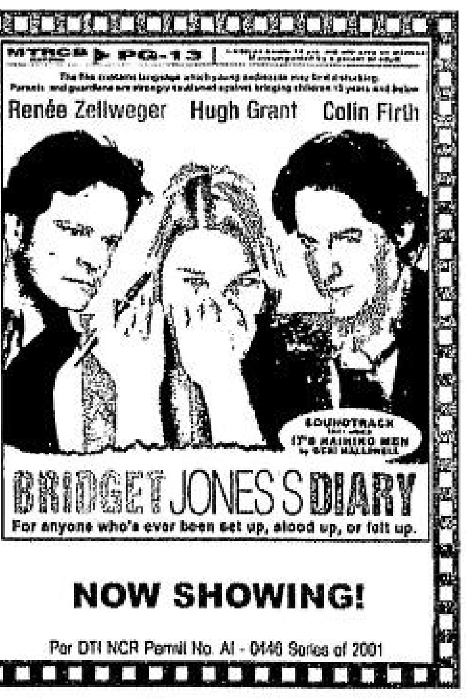

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Schneider, 'ANIMAL': Hayop sa katatawanan

Rob Schneider, lovable Filipino star of the comedy hit DEUCE BIGALOW MALE GIGOLO is back, funnier than ever in Columbia Pictures' THE ANIMAL.

As Marvin Mange, he has the strength of a lion, the agility of a chimpanzee and the affections of... a goat?

Thanks to a life-saving experimental surgery that fuses his body with animal parts, Marvin's dreams of becoming a cop like his dad come true. Armed with new bulging muscles and a keen sense of smell, he even becomes a police hero, as he saves a drowning boy and sniffs out drug smugglers at the airport.

But complications arise when he starts falling for Rianna (Colleen Haskell, *Survivor*), an animal shelter volunteer. Will he finally be able to control his beastly ways with the woman he loves?

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BUSINESS
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IMF says RP forex reserves healthy

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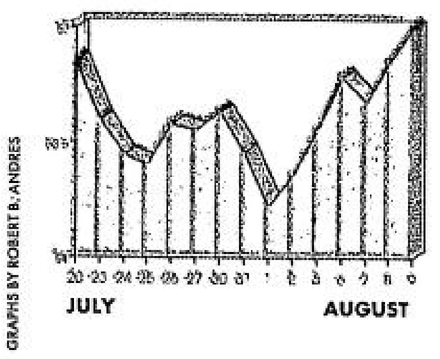


Peso-Dollar Rate

P53.00 = $1
As of 5 p.m., August 9, 2001

¥126.68 = $1
The US dollar was trading at 126.68 as of 5 p.m., August 9, 2001

GOLD:$268.10/268.60 per ounce Hong Kong, August 9, 2001

By CLARISSA S. BATINO

THE INTERNATIONAL Monetary Fund, correcting an earlier computation adopted by at least two foreign institutions, has assured that the Philippines' dollar reserves were sufficient to pay for debts maturing over the next 12 months.

The IMF's earlier computation of the ratio of foreign reserves to short-term debt that it had admitted as erroneous, gave the impression that the country did not have enough dollar reserves to pay for its maturing obligations a year from now.

It earlier computed the ratio of foreign reserves to short-term debt at 94 percent when, in fact, the ratio should have been at 118 percent.

The Fund explained in a statement that a ratio of 100 percent or higher indicated that there was a "comfortable cushion" in meeting short-term debt while a number lower than this "typically signals some tightness in dollar liquidity."

The initial figure led UK-based Barclays Capital as well as the Newsweek International News Magazine to conclude that only half of the country's gross international reserves of $14 billion could be used by the Bangko Sentral ng Pilipinas to defend the peso.

Bangko Sentral Governor Rafael Buenaventura said the IMF computation probably led Barclays to speculate that the government would resort to printing more money to pay its debts.

The country's GIR slid by $241 million to $14.315 billion in July because of debt servicing by the national government as well as the central bank, according to Buenaventura.

Traders, however, believed that the decline in the reserves from $14.556 billion a month ago was caused by the central bank's aggressive intervention in the spot market.

The IMF said a ratio of 118 percent "indicates that the current level of reserves is more than sufficient to service private and public sector debt maturities during the next 12 months."

"The ratio would even be higher if certain obligations including short-term, trade-related credits amounting to $1.6 billion can be assumed to be automatically refinanced on maturity," it added.

The Fund also noted that private sector debt was usually financed from the commercial banking system and not from the BSP's reserves. Thus, it should not pose a drain on the central bank's dollar holdings.

The central bank said the level of reserves in July could still finance 4.2 months' worth of imports of goods and services.

The central bank said the proceeds of the fresh borrowing by the national government should help boost the reserves. Recently, the finance department sealed a $220-million dollar swap with HSBC and an up to $200 million in loans from Citibank.

Over the last two months, the government has raised $200 million from Credit Suisse First Boston and $100 million from JP Morgan Chase. Next month, the government said it would pursue a $500-million bond deal.

From an original GIR target of $16 billion, the central bank has asked the IMF to reduce the dollar reserves target this year to a range of $14 billion to $15 billion.

Comprised mostly of US dollars, the GIR is the total foreign currency holdings of the central bank. Gross reserves also include gold and special drawing rights, the currency used by the IMF.

Gov't, Danding in talks on sequestered SMC shares

THE MACAPAGAL administration and San Miguel Corp. chair Eduardo Cojuangco are in talks to settle a 15-year dispute over ownership of a large block of shares in the country's largest food and beverage firm, Finance Secretary Jose Camacho said yesterday.

"I believe there are talks in an effort to settle legal issues. I personally have not been part of any discussions," Camacho told a news conference, adding he was not aware of progress, if any.

He was asked if there were talks between Cojuangco and the government on the issue of sequestered shares.

In 1986, the government of then President Corazon Aquino sequestered 47 percent of San Miguel shares, including a 20-percent block held by Cojuangco, which he claimed was a personal investment.

The shares were alleged to have been amassed by Cojuangco and associates using money illegally collected from coconut farmers. Cojuangco regained control of San Miguel in 1998 when the Supreme Court granted him voting rights over his claim, but ownership of the entire sequestered stake is still the subject of court proceedings. *Reuters*

Stocks fall 2.3% on currency control fears

SHARE prices finished sharply lower yesterday after President Gloria Macapagal-Arroyo said she would not rule out a currency peg to aid the peso, traders said.

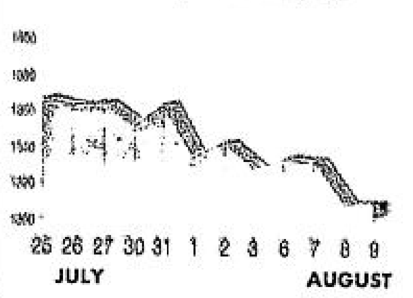
The 30-company Philippine Stock Exchange Index broke its 1300-point psychological support level to end down 30.01 points, or 2.3 percent, at 1278.40, its lowest closing level since Oct. 26, when the index finished at 1267.69. The index closed down 1.8 percent Wednesday.

"You would expect such a reaction (from Ms Macapagal's statement), and you can't blame investors," said KGI Securities vice president Fitzgerald Aclan.

Ms Macapagal said early yesterday that she was not ruling out the imposition of a currency peg. *(See story on page A1)*

Blue chip Philippine Long Distance Telephone was among the most active stocks, sinking P50, or 8 percent, to P575, its lowest close since Aug. 17, 1993, when the stock finished at P560.

PSE Composite Index



(See stock market report on Page B2)

Aclan said Ms Macapagal would have to clarify her statement to assuage investors' jitters over the possibility of a currency peg.

"The market is waiting to see what she really meant to say. I'm sure when she gets back here she will be asked what she really meant by her statement," said Aclan.

Some were reluctant to view Ms Macapagal's quote as a clear indication the government is moving toward foreign exchange controls.

"It doesn't sound definitive," said AB Capital Securities analyst Jose Vistan, in reaction to Ms Macapagal's statement on the currency peg.

Aclan said, if Ms Macapagal's statement was misconstrued and investors are convinced her administration won't pursue foreign exchange controls, negative sentiment could reverse.

Analysts said there was increased foreign selling.

"There seems to be some programmed foreign selling," said Don Malabanan of A and A Securities Corp. "We don't know if this is caused by investors asking their brokers to unload their shares or a (collective) move by foreign houses." *AP, AFP*

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Ford Balintawak, EDSA cor. Seminary Road, Balintawak, Quezon City; Trunk Line 927-9048, Fax No.: 927-5981
Ford EDSA, 29 EDSA, Greenhills, San Juan, Metro Manila; Trunk Lines 726-7181 to 85, Fax No. 723-6311
Ford Libis, 186 E. Rodriguez Jr. Ave., Bagumbayan, Libis, Quezon City; Trunk Line: 637-2044, Fax No.: 637-6008
Ford Makati, 2287 Pasong Tamo Ext., Makati City 1231; Trunk Line. 818-5555, Fax No. 815-0513
Ford Quezon Avenue, Quezon Avenue corner Apo Street, Quezon City; Tel nos. 732-3943, 732-3945
Ford Cabanatuan, Maharlika Highway, Sumacab-Este, Cabanatuan City; Tel No. (044) 464-0111 ; Fax No. (044) 600-4200
Ford Pampanga, San Fernando - Olongapo Highway, City of San Fernando, Pampanga. Trunk Line [illegible]
Ford Bacolod, Araneta St., Barangay Singcang, Bacolod City; [illegible]
Ford Cebu, Magallanes cor. P. Burgos St., Cebu City 6000; Trunk Line [illegible]
Ford Davao, Km. 6, Lanang, Davao City, Tel. No. [illegible]

Megaworld bags ₱1.5-B condo project

By Doris C. Dumlao

PREMIER property developer Megaworld Corp. has forged a deal with safety equipment dealer Pan Pacific Industrial Sales Co. to put up a new P1.5-billion luxury residential condominium project in Legazpi Village, Makati City.

In a disclosure to the Philippine Stock Exchange yesterday, Megaworld spokesperson Francisco Canuto said that under the agreement, the company would develop Pan Pacific's 1,738-square meter property in Makati and provide the funds needed to construct a 38-storey condominium.

The project, which is scheduled for completion in 2004, was approved by Megaworld's board of directors yesterday.

The condominium will have a total building area of 40,000 square meters, including a multi-storey carpark.

"The project is a sign of our continued confidence in the prospects not only of the property industry but of the economy as well," Megaworld senior vice president Cirilo Manlangit said.

"We agree with those analysts who have predicted that demand for residential condominiums in the Makati CBD will pick up by 2003. It is our way of positioning for the recovery that we expect to take place in 2003," Manlangit said.

He said that by the time the project is completed in 2004, whatever excess supply in the residential sector would have been absorbed by the market.

"The project will feature a first-rate cosmopolitan design, a grand hotel-style lobby and a mix of condo units with three bedrooms or less. The focus will be on space, luxury and comfort, which are the essential demands of our target customers," he said.

Megaworld has earmarked about P2.6 billion for capital expenditures this year, of which half would go to the development of the Sheraton Marina complex in Malate. It targets a 10-percent rise in net income this year despite the continuing slump in the property sector.

MIXED REACTIONS

Property firm to list shares

REAL estate company Primex Corp. will become the second local company to brave the battered market this year when it debuts on the Philippine Stock Exchange today.

Primex will list 67 million common shares at an offer price of P2.20 each. This will translate to P147 million, representing 33.5 percent of the company's total equity.

The offering is drawing mixed reaction from the market. In the absence of other interesting stock plays, some analysts said that Primex could draw some attention following expectations of a hefty 120-percent rise in profits this year and a substantial discount to book value.

On the other hand, others said that prospects for the stock could be soured by its high price-earnings (P/E) multiple of 37x and by the fact that proceeds from the offering, being secondary rather than primary, would go to the controlling stockholders and would not benefit the company.

"At the current income level, it will take you 37 years before your money is paid back in earning per share. High P/E is okay for high-growth companies but growth opportunity for Primex is doubtful," Eagle Equities president Joseph Roxas said.

Primex, for its part, said it did not need any new cash infusion at present and has decided to list to prepare for future requirements.

According to the prospectus for its initial public offering, Primex is expecting a net income of P16.3 million this year from P7.5 million last year. The increase in profits is due to anticipated sales from Goldendale II, a recently completed high-end real estate project in Malabon.

First Metro Investment Corp. is the underwriter of the offering of Primex.

Overseer for ASB projects formed

THE VARIOUS parties involved in the rehabilitation of the ASB Group of Companies have formed a Project Governing Board (PGB) to oversee the completion of projects and the development of the land-banked properties of the developer.

The ASB Group is the owner and developer of numerous real estate and condominium projects of which 19 are completed and fully sold while four—the BSA Twin Tower, Garden Heights, the ASB Malayan Tower and Legaspi Place—are currently under various stages of construction.

The PGB will he chaired by Fortunato Cruz, the rehabilitation receiver appointed by the Securities and Exchange Commission, with ASB chair Luke Roxas, Leonardo Siguion-Reyna (representing the unsecured creditors), and a representative from a still to be named trustee bank as members.

The guidelines for the operation of the PGB and its relationship to ASB, the trustee bank, creditors, the SEC and other parties are being drafted by its financial adviser, former SEC commissioner Monico Jacob.

DISCLOSURES

ABRA Mining & Industrial Corp. will hold its annual stockholders' meeting on August 31, 8 a.m. at the Amic Compound in Bangued, Abra. Stockholders as of Aug. 13 are entitled to notice of and to vote at the meeting.

* * *

RFM Corp. confirmed reports it was in talks with **Vitarich Corp.** for a possible merger of their poultry unit. The company also has plans to search for investors in its retail food businesses, **Little Ceasars pizza and Orange Julius.**

* * *

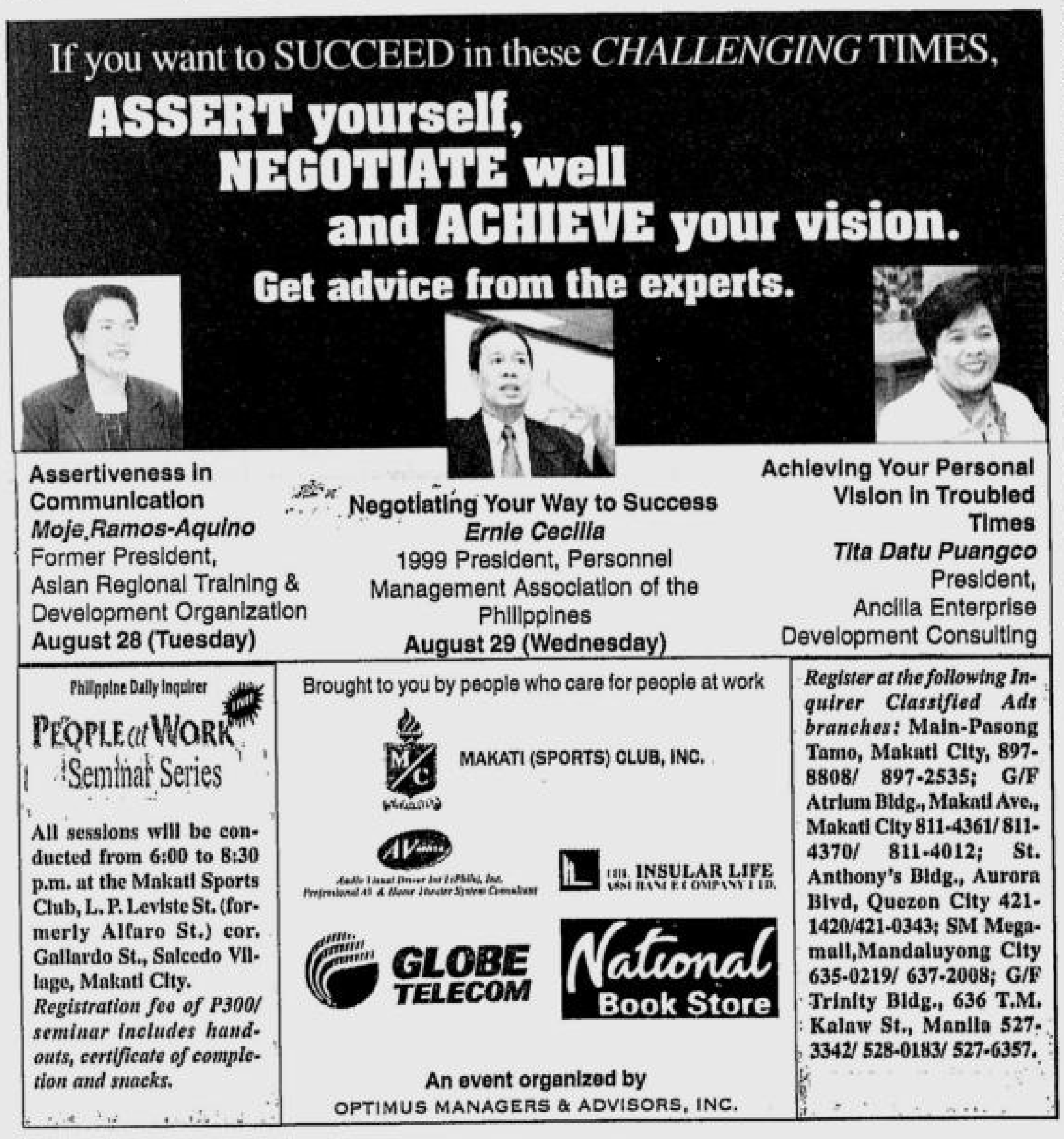
ELECTED directors of **Prudential Bank** were Jose Santos, Francisco Delgado, Sonia Santos, Augusto De Jesus, Augusto Benedicto Santos, Roman Santos, Virginia Syjuco, Mario Santos Jr., Augusto Estrada, Tetsuya Ota and William Tiosio.

* * *

FIL-Hispano Holdings Corp. announced the resignation of Roberto Macasaet Jr. as president and chief executive officer of the company effective Aug. 31.

* * *

ELECTED directors of **DMCI Holdings Inc.** were David Consunji, Cesar Buenaventura, Isidro Consunji, Jorge Consunji, Victor Consunji, Ma. Edwina Laperal, Herbert Consunji, Evaristo Francisco and Oscar Reyes. *Compiled by Maricar D. Tolosa, PDI Research*



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Moje Ramos-Aquino
Former President, Asian Regional Training & Development Organization
August 28 (Tuesday)

Negotiating Your Way to Success
Ernie Cecilia
1999 President, Personnel Management Association of the Philippines
August 29 (Wednesday)

Achieving Your Personal Vision in Troubled Times
Tita Datu Puangco
President, Ancilla Enterprise Development Consulting

Philippine Daily Inquirer
PEOPLE at WORK Seminar Series

All sessions will be conducted from 6:00 to 8:30 p.m. at the Makati Sports Club, L. P. Leviste St. (formerly Alfaro St.) cor. Gallardo St., Salcedo Village, Makati City.
Registration fee of P300/ seminar includes handouts, certificate of completion and snacks.

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Philippine Stock Exchange

(As of Thursday, Aug. 9, 2001)

STOCKS	OPEN	HIGH	LOW	CLOSE	VOLUME
BANKS & FINANCIAL SERVICES					
BANKS					
Bank of the Phil. Islands	62.5	62.5	60.5	61.5	173,600
China Banking Corp.	620	620	620	620	2,700
Equitable PCI Bank Inc.	34	34	32	32	47,800
Metropolitan Bank & Trust	209	210	208	209	99,670
Philippine National Bank	47.5	47.5	47.5	47.5	308,300
Union Bank of the Phil.	24.75	24.75	24.75	24.75	6,400
FINANCIAL SERVICE					
Bankard Inc.	1.36	1.36	1.36	1.36	75,000
Manulife Financial Corp.	1600	1600	1600	1600	280
Sun Life Financial Serv.	1310	1310	1290	1290	3,590
COMMERCIAL & INDUSTRIAL					
COMMUNICATION					
ABS-CBN Broadcasting Corp.	37.5	37.5	37.5	37.5	11,700
Digital Telecom Phils. Inc.	0.46	0.46	0.46	0.46	160,000
Easycall Phils. Inc.-Com	1.4	1.4	1.4	1.4	30,000
Globe Telecom Inc.	620	620	615	615	955,840
Island Info and Tech Inc.	0.032	0.032	0.032	0.032	2,000,000
Liberty Telecoms Holdings	0.48	0.5	0.48	0.5	30,150,000
Manila Bulletin Pub. Corp.	3.9	3.9	3.9	3.9	10,000
Phil. Long Dis Tel Co.	610	610	565	575	143,600
POWER & ENERGY					
Manila Electric Co. A	31.5	32	31	31	19,100
Manila Electric Co. B	37.5	38.5	37.5	38	1,679,900
Petron Corp.	1.84	1.86	1.76	1.78	4,259,000
TRANSPORTATION SERVICES					
Int'l Container Term'l Sv	1.9	1.9	1.8	1.82	2,253,000
CONSTRUCTION & OTHER RELATED PRODUCTS					
Republic Glass Hldg. Corp.	1.3	1.38	1.3	1.38	160,000
Union Cement Corp.	1.16	1.18	1.16	1.16	484,000
FOOD, BEVERAGES & TOBACCO					
Cosmos Bottling Corp.	5.8	5.8	5.7	5.7	513,000
Jollibee Foods Corp.	13.25	13.5	13.25	13.5	174,400
La Tondeña Distillers Inc.	26	26	25	25	105,600
RFM Corp.	2.34	2.34	2.32	2.32	998,000
San Miguel Corp. A	41	41.5	40.5	41	27,000
San Miguel Corp. B	53.5	54	53.5	54	166,000
Vitarich Corp.	0.5	0.55	0.5	0.55	330,000
HOLDING FIRMS					
Abacus Con Res & Hdg A	0.67	0.67	0.67	0.67	50,000
Ayala Corp. 6.1	0 6.1	6	6	17	,247,000
Aboitiz Equity Ventures	1.54	1.58	1.54	1.54	122,000
Alliance Global Group Inc.	10.75	10.75	10.5	10.5	700
Ajo.Net Holdings Inc.	1.12	1.12	1.04	1.04	1,080,000
Alcorn Gold Res. Corp.	0.008	0.008	0.008	0.008	137,000,000
Anglo Phil Holdings Corp.	0.44	0.44	0.44	0.44	300,000
Balabac Resources & Hldgs.	0.21	0.21	0.21	0.21	100,000
Benpres Holdings Corp.	1.72	1.72	1.7	1.7	2,811,000
Southeast Asian Cement	0.17	0.17	0.15	0.15	950,000
DMCI Holdings Inc.	0.24	0.24	0.24	0.24	100,000
Ebecom Holdings Inc.	0.115	0.115	0.115	0.115	300,000
First Phil Hldgs Corp.	26.5	26.5	26	26	78,900
Global Equities Inc.	0.21	0.21	0.21	0.21	20,000
Ipeople Inc.	1.12	1.12	1.1	1.12	19,000
Ipeople Inc. B	1.14	1.14	1.14	1.14	20,000
J.G. Summit Holdings Inc.	1.92	1.92	1.9	1.9	7,470,000
Medco Holdings	0.22	0.22	0.22	0.22	20,000
Metro Pacific Corp.	0.4	0.4	0.39	0.39	870,000
Solid Group Inc.	0.45	0.45	0.45	0.45	50,000
Tanduay Holdings Inc.	5.4	5.5	5.3	5.3	41,000
Uniwide Holdings Inc.	0.22	0.23	0.22	0.23	430,000
Zeus Holdings Inc.	0.5	0.5	0.5	0.5	20,000
MANUFACTURING, DISTRIBUTION & TRADING					
Interphil Labs Inc. A	0.91	0.91	0.91	0.91	750,000
Music Corp.	1.58	1.58	1.56	1.56	40,000
Mabuhay Vinyl Corp.	0.93	0.93	0.89	0.89	110,000
Picop Resources Inc.	0.0875	0.0875	0.0875	0.0875	200,000
Central Azucar Don Pedro	0.83	0.83	0.81	0.83	230,000
HOTEL, RECREATION & OTHER SERVICE					
Belle Corp.	0.54	0.54	0.53	0.53	1,900,000
Fairmont Holdings Inc.	0.47	0.47	0.47	0.47	430,000
Leisure & Resorts Corp.	0.5	0.5	0.5	0.5	1,000,000
Premiere Ent. Prod. Inc.	0.24	0.24	0.24	0.24	110,000
BONDS, PREFERRED & WARRANTS					
Abs-Cbn Hldgs. Corp. (Pdr)	38	38	37.5	37.5	502,400
Cosmos Bottling Corp.-Pref	10	10	10	10	6,000
Equitable PCI Bank-War	1.64	1.64	1.64	1.64	20,000
Jollibee Warrants	13	13.25	13	13.25	21,500
Macroasia Corp. Warrants	0.2	0.2	0.2	0.2	100,000
Omico Corp. Warrant	0.0022	0.0022	0.0022	0.0022	3,000,000
PNB Warrants	12	12	12	12	200
OTHERS					
Centro Escolar University	7	7	7	7	3,000
PROPERTY					
Ayala Land Inc.	4.75	4.75	4.6	4.6	7,301,000
C & P Homes Inc.	0.22	0.22	0.22	0.22	30,000
Cebu Prop. Vent B	0.4	0.4	0.4	0.4	1,000,000
Cyber Bay Corp.	0.23	0.235	0.23	0.235	300,000
Empire East Land Inc.	0.27	0.27	0.27	0.27	200,000
Edsa Prop. Holdings Inc.	1.04	1.04	1.02	1.02	10,000
Filinvest Land Inc.	1.84	1.84	1.8	1.8	1,885,000
City & Land Developers	1.9	1.9	1.9	1.9	30,000
Phil Realty and Holdings	0.08	0.08	0.08	0.08	400,000
SM Prime Holdings Inc.	5.9	5.9	5.8	5.8	4,398,000
Universal Rightfield Prop.	0.0725	0.0725	0.0725	0.0725	500,000
MINING					
Apex Mining Co. Inc. A	0.0055	0.0055	0.0055	0.0055	9,000,000
Apex Mining Co. Inc. B	0.0055	0.0055	0.0055	0.0055	1,000,000
Atlas Cons. Min & Dev't.	2	2	2	2	1,000
Lepanto Cons. Mng. Co. B	0.17	0.17	0.17	0.17	100,000
Manila Mining Corp. A	0.0042	0.0042	0.0042	0.0042	2,000,000
Omico Corp.	0.0038	0.0038	0.0038	0.0038	1,000,000
Polar Mines & Dev't Corp.	0.019	0.019	0.019	0.019	5,500,000
Philex Mining Corp. A	0.3	0.3	0.3	0.3	110,000
Philex Mining Corp. B	0.34	0.34	0.32	0.32	1,150,000
OIL					
Imperial Res.	0.018	0.018	0.018	0.018	22,000,000
Oriental Pet. & Min. A	0.0044	0.0044	0.0044	0.0044	2,000,000
South China Resources Inc	0.25	0.25	0.24	0.24	460,000

	SHARES	VALUE (P)
Banks & Fin Svc	717,340	54,651,960.00
Comm'l & Ind'l	222,152,840	940,123,185.00
PRO	16,054,000	63,482,360.00
Mining	19,861,000	595,700.00
OIL	24,460,000	515,800.00
GRAND TOTALS:	283,245,180	1,059,369,005.00
	AVERAGES	
Banks & Fin Svc	531.20	DOWN 8.30
Comm'l & Ind'l	1,805.57	DOWN 41.62
PRO	474.75	DOWN 8.82
Mining	1,236.53	DOWN 15.39
OIL	1.78	UP 0.04
All Shares Index	800.55	DOWN 16.73
Composite	1,278.40	DOWN 30.01

NO. OF ADVANCES: 16; NO. OF DECLINES: 45; NO. OF UNCHANGED: 32; NO. OF TRADED ISSUES: 93; NO. OF TRADES: 2,097

CURRENCIES

Aug. 9, 2001

Country	Unit	Euro Equivalent	Foreign currency in US$	Foreign currency in Peso
United States	Dollar	1.135847	1.000000	53.3030
Japan	Yen	0.009196	0.008096	0.4315
United Kingdom	Pound	1.611199	1.418500	75.6103
Hong Kong	Dollar	0.145633	0.128215	6.8342
Switzerland	Franc	0.664472	0.585001	31.1823
Canada	Dollar	0.740352	0.651806	34.7432
Singapore	Dollar	0.638943	0.562525	29.9843
Australia	Dollar	0.588157	0.517813	27.6010
Bahrain	Dinar	3.013018	2.652661	141.3948
Kuwait	Dinar	N/A	N/A	N/A
Saudi Arabia	Rial	0.302876	0.266652	14.2134
Brunei	Dollar	0.063681	0.056065	2.9884
Indonesia	Rupiah	0.000122	0.000107	0.0057
Thailand	Baht	0.025008	0.022017	1.1736
UAE	Dirham	0.309326	0.272331	14.5161
Korea	Won	0.000891	0.000784	0.0418
Euro	Euro	1.000000	0.880400	46.9280
Germany	Mark	0.511291	0.450141	23.9939
France	Franc	0.152450	0.134216	7.1541
Netherlands	Guilder	0.453780	0.399508	21.2950
Austria	Schilling	0.072673	0.063981	3.4104
Belgium	Franc	0.024790	0.021825	1.1633
Italy	Lire	0.000518	0.000456	0.0243
Finland	Markka	0.168188	0.148073	7.8927
Portugal	Escudo	0.004988	0.004391	0.2341
Spain	Peseta	0.006010	0.005291	0.2820
Luxemburg	Franc	0.024790	0.021825	1.1633
Ireland	Punt	1.269738	1.117877	59.5862

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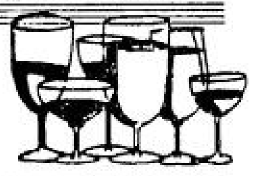

By Victor C. Agustin

THE GOVERNMENT plans to forge a comprehensive settlement on the contentious coco levy funds and the Marcos money issues to address the deepening budget deficit for next year and at the same time use the multibillion-peso proceeds to pump-prime the stalling economy.

Speaker Jose de Venecia Jr. sounded off INQUIRER editors Wednesday night about the ambitious undertaking; the editors in turn agreed with the solon that, after 15 years of litigation, a resolution to the festering issues has to be reached.

The Speaker, his very much slimmer wife Gina, and up-and-coming congressman from Camarines Sur, Rolando Andaya, visited the INQUIRER, bringing a feast of native dishes and delicacies ostensibly as part of the series of "victory dinners" the Pangasinan solon has been holding to celebrate his comeback role in the House.

The plan, as the Speaker outlined it, would involve the government brokering a settlement between the different coco levy claimants and the group of San Miguel chair Eduardo Cojuangco Jr. on the 27-percent coco levy shares in San Miguel Corp.

The proposed settlement on the 27-percent bloc would be outside the 20-percent shareholdings in San Miguel that Cojuangco claims as his own.

The settlement on the Marcos money, on the other hand, would involve the funds already in escrow with Philippine National Bank.

De Venecia said there were "emissaries" already working on the various parties. The normally voluble solon declined, however, to divulge more details.

The settlement plan was floated toward the end of the dinner, prefaced by the Speaker about the need for the INQUIRER to focus on and support the "national development" agenda.

While INQUIRER editor in chief Letty Jimenez-Magsanoc vigorously objected to the suggestion that a newspaper must have a specific news agenda, she as well as the rest of the INQUIRER staffers, present company included, agreed that a resolution to those two dragging issues has some way, some how, got to be reached.

A proposal to also include the multibillion-peso tax evasion case of taipan Lucio Tan, advanced by yours truly, was promptly shot down.

Our own knee-jerk assessment is that, if President Macapagal-Arroyo is able to swing these deals and, more importantly, judiciously use the proceeds of the windfall along with those of Malampaya's, we have genuine reason to greet each other a "Happy and Prosperous New Year" this coming holiday season.

Shooting JimPol's friends

ECHOING media-battered Sen. Panfilo Lacson, Sen. Edgardo Angara said he was disturbed by reports that a number of media personalities have been appointed by the present Malacañang to the boards of government corporations.

This, a huffing and puffing Angara said, is clearly a conflict-of-situation for the men and women who report and comment on the government.

The senator threatened to disclose the list as soon as he receives it.

Well, we have news for the former Estrada executive secretary. A number of those in the list were feeding from JimPol's palm until a few months ago. Also, a number of them are holdovers from the Estrada administration.

If Angara wishes to pick on these tiddlers (whose honoraria are loose change compared with the donations/retainers received by Angara's fellow senators and their respective law offices), please, go ahead and amuse us.

Heard through the grapevine

TAIPAN Alfonso Yuchengco will be rewarded with the ambassadorial posting at the United Nations as a valedictory to his long business and diplomatic career. Former transportation undersecretary Josefina Lichauco, who was supposed to have been originally slated for the position, will instead be assigned to UN, Geneva.

(Cocktales may be reached by e-mail at cocktales_pdi@yahoo.com or at cocktales_pdi@hotmail.com.)

Southern Energy tops list of biggest moneymakers

BY TINA ARCEO-DUMLAO

POWER generator Southern Energy Holdings Philippines Inc., state-run Philippine Amusement and Gaming Corp., and food and beverage giant San Miguel Corp. emerged last year's top moneymakers despite the economic and political upheavals that rocked the country.

The recently released 2001 edition of the "Philippines 5000" publication showed that these three firms were among the top 5,000 firms that managed to record a 12.77-percent increase in net profit last year, a turnaround compared with a 26.13-percent decline in net profit the previous year.

The increase in net profit was largely due to the successful attempts of many corporations to cut costs, pay off dollar-denominated debts and sell non-core assets.

Rounding up the list of top 10 moneymakers last year were Southern Energy Quezon Inc., Southern Energy Pangasinan Inc., retail firm Shoe Mart Inc., SM Investments Corp., food manufacturer Nestlé Philippines Inc. and the Bank of the Philippine Islands.

The Philippines 5000 report showed that the same companies landed in the top five list in terms of sales in 1999 and 2000. No. 1 was state-run National Power Corp., followed by private electric distributor Manila Electric Co.

Texas Instruments Philippines Inc. replaced Petron Corp. at No. 3 with the petroleum refining firm sliding down to 4th place. Pilipinas Shell Petroleum Corp. remained at No. 5.

The report showed that the manufacturing and retail industries posted the biggest improvements last year. The net income of the 1,922 top firms under the manufacturing sector increased by 5.3 percent from P36.464 billion to P38.398 billion, while the retail industry's top firms rose by 31.28 percent during the same period.

The increase in the profits of the firms under these two sectors were enough to offset the decrease in the profits of other sectors such as agriculture, mining and quarrying, construction, transport and real estate.

Sales or revenues of the top 5,000 firms also rose last year by 2.38 percent from P3.202 trillion to P3.278 trillion.

The growth rate, however, was slightly lower compared with the 3.44-percent increase in revenues from 1998 to 1999. This was attributed to the withdrawal of funds from the market following the loss of confidence in the former Estrada administration.

Completing the top 10 firms in terms of sales are Caltex (Philippines) Inc., Fujitsu Computer Prod. Corp. of the Philippines, Philippine Long Distance Telephone Co., San Miguel Corp. and Nestlé Philippines Inc.

The report showed that Napocor recorded the biggest sales but also emerged the biggest money loser, with losses amounting to P12.963 billion. NEC Computer Storage Philippines Inc. was next with its loss of P7.654 billion, followed by the Philippine National Bank, Pilipino Telephone Corp. and the National Food Authority.

The Philippines 5000 publication is the result of the cooperation that started in 1992 between the Securities and Exchange Commission and CIBI Information Inc. It is the official publication that shows the performance of the top corporations.

BIGGEST MONEYMAKERS

	In billions
Southern Energy Holdings Philippines Inc.	P8.533
Philippine Amusement and Gaming Corp.	P8.036
San Miguel Corp.	P6.844
Southern Energy Quezon Inc.	P6.208
Southern Energy Pangasinan Inc.	P5.188
Shoe Mart Inc.	P4.244
SM Investments Corp.	P3.303
Nestlé Philippines Inc.	P3.221
SM Prime Holdings Inc.	P3.137
Bank of the Philippine Islands	P3.051

BIGGEST MONEY LOSERS

National Power Corp.	P12.963
NEC Computer Storage Philippines Inc.	P7.654
Philippine National Bank	P5.973
Pilipino Telephone Corp.	P5.151
National Food Authority	P4.281
HEIPC Philippines Holding Co. Inc.	P3.701
Nextel Communications Phils. Inc.	P3.502
Caltex (Philippines) Inc.	P3.037
Luzon Electronics Technology Inc.	P2.053
Federal Homes Inc.	P2.000

Reinventing Internet cafés

BY TINA ARCEO-DUMLAO

SUCCESS STORY

ONE good thing about children born to a family with established businesses is that they know a good opportunity when they see one. Siblings Felix III and Katrina Limcaoco saw one in the Internet café business way back in 1995, when the World Wide Web was not yet part of the Filipino vocabulary.

It was actually Felix III, or Bingo, who pushed the idea of putting up an Internet café. He thought it was the logical next step for him since he was already into distributing computers.

Combined with his knowledge of the Internet considering he was a computer science graduate from Stanford University, he knew it would be a matter of time before Filipinos would embrace the Internet and its many benefits.

"At first, the Internet café inside Park Square in Makati was half a showroom for his computer hardware and half an Internet café. There were only six stations where people usually came in to send e-mail or to chat," Katrina said.

The brother-and-sister team, however, knew that people would use the Internet for more than just sending e-mail and chatting. This was one reason why they chose the name Universe Café.

"We wanted a name that would not box us in because we knew that the Internet would evolve. We did not want to be stuck with a name with 'Web' in it," Katrina explained.

The Universe Café was doing well for about a year before they grabbed the opportunity to put up a similar café at the SM Megamall. It was a small space beside the theaters but it did well, tapping on the high traffic of people going in and out of the cinemas.

"I think we did well in converting a dead spot into something that earned revenue for the mall because, after the Megamall, we were given the same spot in the other SM branches," Katrina said.

From Park Square and Megamall in 1997, the Universe Café network has grown to 12 branches. Other Universe Cafés are found at the Glorietta, Tektite, Robinson's Place, Metropolitan Avenue in Makati, Bacoor and in Dasmariñas, Cavite.

"I think we were able to grow quickly because we were one of the first, if not the first, Internet café to be put up in the Philippines. It also helped that we got good locations every time we put up a branch. It made people aware of the Internet," Katrina said.

Universe Café caters mostly to students and young professionals, usually in their first jobs, who cannot afford their own computer and Internet connection yet. This is why Universe Café tries to keep prices very affordable to allow these people to access the Internet but not shell out too much cash.

"We also try to assist the people who go into the Internet cafés. We actually have people who go around the café helping the people out. We are not like the other cafés that came up later that take for granted the fact that some of the people who go into their stores don't know the Internet that well yet," Katrina said.

She added that Universe Café invested in extra bandwidth to provide faster connection to the Internet. Most of the Manila cafés, she said, have at least a leased line, while others have broadband connection. Only the Dasmariñas branch is still on dial-up connection but would be upgraded later to a leased line access.

"We are one of the few who are investing on broadband and on a big bandwidth because we really want to make the Internet a part of the lifestyle. It is a part of the evolution of the Internet," she said.

Customers, for instance, can shop online with the Universe Café providing the payment facility. They can also go to a Universe Café and compile their own music collection by going through one of the many free music sites.

Another come-on is the food. Katrina knows all about good food, being the managing director of the Old Swiss Inn Restaurant with its three branches at the Garden Plaza Hotel and Suites, Olympia Towers and Greenbelt Mall.

"We want to open a new market by turning the Internet into a lifestyle. We are also thinking about expanding further through franchising," she said.

Smart, Nokia sign $200-M deal

BY ABIGAIL L. HO

SMART Communications Inc. said yesterday that it had signed a $200-million contract with telecom equipment maker Nokia Oyj for the next phase of its GSM network expansion.

Smart is a unit of the country's dominant telecom firm, Philippine Long Distance Telephone Co.

The equipment being supplied will enable Smart to boost its subscriber capacity to more than 6 million by the end of the year and up to 10 million by 2002, the company said in a statement.

At the end of June, Smart had 3.6 million GSM network subscribers while Pilipino Telephone Corp., which runs on Smart's network, had approximately 780,000.

Globe Telecom Inc., Smart's key rival, is also spending heavily at present on building up its capacity.

Smart said Nokia would install new equipment enabling it to generate substantial savings on a capacity-per-subscriber basis, and to improve service quality.

It added that it expected the project to be completed in about a year's time.

PLDT shares closed down P50 at P575 while Piltel stock was untraded after last closing at 48 centavos on Wednesday.

Globe shares finished flat at P615.

The main composite index was off 30.01 points, or 2.29 percent, at 1,278.40

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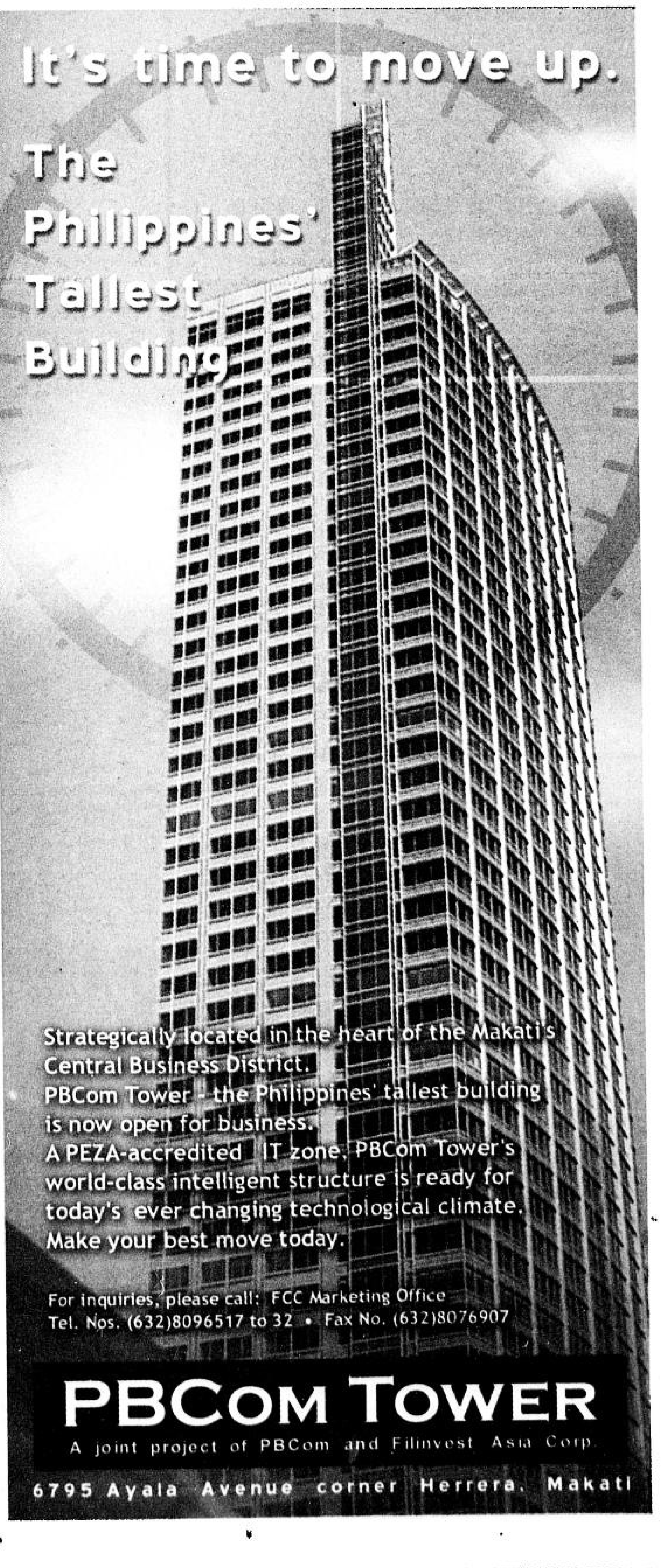

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ARMED FORCES OF THE PHILIPPINES
Camp General Emilio Aguinaldo, Quezon City
Tel: 911-6433/911-6001 Loc 6592; Tel/Fax: 912-5491
bac_secretariat_afpmp@hotmail.com

INVITATION TO APPLY FOR ELIGIBILITY AND TO BID

The Armed Forces of the Philippines invites interested parties to apply for eligibility and to bid for the UPGRADE OF TEN (10) UH-1H HELICOPTERS of the Philippine Air Force with an approved budget of Three Hundred Eighty Four Million Pesos (Php 384,000.000.00) under the AFP Modernization Program.

Only bids from prime contractors who may be the original equipment manufacturer (OEM) of the UH-1H Helicopter and its T-53 Engine or their duly authorized repair facilities shall be entertained.

Eligibility/Bid documents will be available for issuance starting **August 10, 2001** during office hours at the BAC Secretariat, Office of the Deputy Chief of Staff for Capability, Material and Technology Development, J9, AFP, 3rd Floor, Bulwagang Mabini, Camp General Emilio Aguinaldo, Quezon City upon payment of Thirty Five Thousand Pesos (Php 35,000.00) which is not refundable. The form of payment will be in cash or cashier's check in favor of the AFP Modernization Act Trust Fund.

A Special Power of Attorney, issued by the prospective Bidder authorizing its representative to purchase the bid documents in its behalf, shall be required before issuance of the bid documents.

A Pre-Bid Conference is scheduled on **August 23, 2001** at 2:00 PM (local time) at the Armed Forces of the Philippines Commissioned Officers Club (AFPCOC), Camp Aguinaldo, Quezon City. Bidders are required to submit their queries in writing to the BAC Secretariat seven (7) days before to the Pre-Bid Conference.

Deadline for submission of appropriate Eligibility/Bid Documents (First Stage) shall be announced during the Pre-Bid Conference. Bidders shall be allowed to inspect the UH-1H Helicopters and PAF Facilities where the project will be undertaken after the Pre-Bid Conference until the deadline for submission of the First Stage Envelopes.

The Armed Forces of the Philippines reserves the right to reject any or all bids and to waive deficiencies embodied therein without assuming any obligation whatsoever for any expenses or losses that may be incurred by the bidder in the preparation of the bid.

FOR THE CHAIRMAN, BIDS & AWARDS COMMITTEE (BAC):

(Sgd.) **JOSE L. REYES**
Colonel (GSC) PAF
Vice-Chairman, BAC

(PDI--August 9 & 10, 2001)

People, Events & Products

ARIES B. ESPINOSA, Assistant Editor
aespinosa@inquirer.com.ph

Nestle inaugurates south distribution center

IN LINE with its long-term commitment to continued leadership and growth in the food sector, Nestle Philippines Inc. recently inaugurated its new south distribution center, now the company's largest distribution facility in the country. The facility services the majority of Nestle customers in South Luzon and concurrently serves as redistribution center for the company's national distribution network.

The distribution center features state-of-the-art systems and equipment that will further enhance logistical efficiencies in the local distribution of Nestle goods.

The south distribution center, which started operations late last year, provides storage for grocery and confectionery finished goods, as well as 210,000 liters of ice cream and chilled products. With a projected throughput of 1.3 million cases a month, the distribution center handles an average of 130 incoming and outgoing trucks per day. It is one of the country's largest distribution facilities for finished goods.

Located on a 4.7-hectare property in Calamba, Laguna, the south distribution center has a covered floor area of 14,000 sq. m. and ample parking for trucks. Some two hectares of open space is available for future expansion. The company's South Luzon1 sales office, located in the complex, houses the area sales staff from the grocery, ice cream and confectionery business units.

The center is managed by Fast Services Corporation. Nestle AVP and SCM distribution head Ike Castillo said the facility is an example of outstanding collaboration between two business entities.

"The south distribution center is a collaborative alliance between Nestle and the Fast Group. Several years back, both companies realized that we could derive strength from this collaboration. The end result is a successful story of partnership. Today, we take pride in having a world-class facility for distribution," said the Nestle executive.

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Republic of the Philippines
SOCIAL SECURITY COMMISSION
Makati City

LAKAS NG NAGKAKAISANG MANGGAGAWA (LAKAS-NAFLU) and SABAS ARGUELLES Y INION,
Petitioners,

- versus - **SSC CASE NO. 13248**

JESUSA VDA. DE CORUNA and CONSUELO RODRIGUEZ, represented by her legal heir, DINA MARIE PALERMO, Owner of Hda. Doming,
Repondents,

SOCIAL SECURITY SYSTEM,
Intervenor.

x--------------------------------------x

NOTICE OF RESOLUTION ENTERED

TO: DINA MARIE PALERMO

GREETINGS:

Notice is hereby given that on the 18th day of July, 2001, a RESOLUTION, consisting of fourteen pages, was entered in the above-mentioned case, the dispositive portion of which reads as follows:

> "WHEREFORE, this Commission hereby finds, and so holds, that the petitioner Sabas Arguelles was employed with respondent Jesusa Vda. de Coruna for the period September 1962 until August 1965 and with respondent Consuelo Rodriguez for the period from October 1974 up to June 1976.
>
> Accordingly, respondent Jesusa Vda. de Coruna is ordered to pay the SSS, within sixty (60) days from receipt hereof, the amount of P46.50 representing the unpaid SS contributions corresponding to the petitioner's period of employment, the 3% per month penalty for late remittance thereof in the sum of P628.22 computed as of August 5, 2001, plus the additional penalty accruing thereafter until fully paid and P70.06 as damages for misrepresenting the petitioner's true date of employment pursuant to Section 24 (b) of the SS Law, as amended.
>
> Should Jesusa Vda. de Coruna pay her liability for unpaid SS contributions within the aforesaid period, the 3% per month penalty shall be deemed condoned pursuant to Social Security Commission Resolution No. 397-S.97, as amended by SSC Res. Nos. 112-S.98 and 982-S.99, implementing Section 30 on condonation of penalty under Republic Act No. 8282 (The Social Security Act of 1997)
>
> Meanwhile, because Consuelo Rodriguez had paid in full the SS contributions that should have been remitted in favor of the petitioner, her legal heir, Dina Marie Palermo, shall no longer be held liable for any obligations to the SSS in respect of said member's SS contributions.
>
> Finally, intervenor SSS is hereby directed to forthwith pay petitioner Sabas Arguelles the appropriate retirement benefit pursuant to Section 12 of the SS Law, as amended, subject to its existing rules and regulations.
>
> SO ORDERED."

SOCIAL SECURITY COMMISSION

(PDI--Aug. 10, 2001)

COLORFUL *KALESAS*

Four of the eight Jollibee *kalesas* line up before the parade which marked the fastfood leader's 400th store opening in Intramuros, Manila. The parade featured a kiddie marching band who played Jollibee jingles and other popular songs with their xylophones and drums. Each of the eight *kalesas* carried one child in colorful bee-like costumes bearing a letter which spelled Jollibee. The *kalesas* were trailed by pairs of Jollibee crew clad in Filipiniana outfits as they provided leaflets to the crowd waiting for the store opening. The parade also featured a grand float carrying the various Jollibee mascots and the 400the store logo.

RCMM week ongoing

THE ROTARY Club of Malate Manila (RCMM), a newly chartered club, is having its first Rotary Week until Aug. 13. During this week, RCMM will prepare and line up a number of activities for the residents of Malate, as follows: a) A week-long Ati-atihan parade around the Malate-Adriatico area, b) Logo design contest for the new club, c) Soup-kitchen feeding activity for the Pre-School of Malate, d) On-the-spot painting for street children on Aug. 12, e) Medical mission on Aug. 12, and f) Most outstanding tourism police awarding on Aug. 13.

The officers of the new Malate Club are Tranquil G.S. Salvador III, charter president; Robert Raymund G. Raroque, VP/president-elect; Raul J. de Vera Jr., secretary; J. Salvador S. Curameng, treasurer; David P. Corpin Jr., PRO; Nestor M. Nario, club marshall; Rizal Antonio D. Meru, director for club service A; William O. Cheng, director for vocational service; Divina V. Santos, director for community service; Jaime C. Lacaba, director for international service; Vicente E. delas Peñas, director for youth service; and Jaime "Jimmy" Corpin, district governor's special representative.

Characters' first wholesale outlet

CHARACTERS Unlimited, the youth's newest shopping sensation and home of well-loved characters like Robby Rabbit, Snoopy, Barbie, Garfield and the Sesame Street Gang proudly announces the latest member of the family.

Characters Unlimited has opened its first wholesale outlet at 545 Juan Luna Street, Binondo, Manila to give wholesalers and retailers high quality bags, school supplies, hair accessories, ceramic products, children's apparel and other collectibles. Truly, this is a new venture for business enthusiasts who want value for their money.

You may also visit CU branches at Tutuban Centermall 1; Tutuban Centermall 2; Festival Supermall, Alabang; Ali Mall, Cubao; 1207-1209 Masangkay, Manila; Magic Star Mall, Tarlac City; Robinsons Place, Imus; Pavilion Mall, Biñan, Laguna; Riverbanks Center, Marikina City; and the soon-to-open shop at Robinsons Place, Novaliches.

PBCOM TOWER NOW A SPECIAL IT ZONE

President Gloria Macapagal-Arroyo presents Presidential Proclamation No. 53 to Filinvest Development Corporation chair Andrew Gotianun Sr. (left) and Philippine Bank of Communications vice chair Ralph C. Nubla Jr. (right). This establishes the status of PBCom Tower as an official information technology zone, following the earlier endorsement of the Philippine Economic Zone Authority (Peza) for the high-tech building created for IT target locators. PBCom Tower is a joint development of Filinvest Asia Corporation and the Philippine Bank of Communications.

Celebrate with the new Fiesta Spaghetti

RFM Corporation, the pioneer in flour milling in Asia, gives you more reasons to turn ordinary events into special occasions with the improved Fiesta Spaghetti which combines winning taste, perfect firmness and value for your money. Fiesta Spaghetti is now even better with its superior formulation using imported wheat from North America and with a high-grade customized flour blend for firmer and whiter pasta.

The improved Fiesta Spaghetti also comes in a new packaging for a more contemporary and festive look to live up to its name and its new catch phrase "*Ang saya mag-*Fiesta, *sa sarap ng* Fiesta". The new Fiesta Spaghetti gives you the same pasta qualities offered by leading brands at a more affordable price, making it the smarter pasta alternative. Try the new Fiesta Spaghetti and start turning your ordinary event into a special occasion and experience the difference.

INQUIRER TRiViA

By BONG BARRAMEDA

Deep impact

Q. What's the chance of a comet or asteroid slamming the Earth in the near future?

A. The Earth orbits the Sun in a sort of cosmic shooting gallery, subject to impacts from comets and asteroids. It is only fairly recently that we have come to appreciate that these impacts by asteroids and comets (often called Near Earth Objects, or NEOs) pose a significant hazard to life and property. Although the annual probability of the Earth being struck by a large asteroid or comet is extremely small, the consequences of such a collision are so catastrophic that it is prudent to assess the nature of the threat and prepare to deal with it.

At present no asteroid or comet is known to be on a collision course with the Earth. The chances of a collision within the next century with an object one kilometer or more in diameter are very small (less than 1 in a thousand). But such a collision is possible and could happen at any time. Studies have shown that the risk from cosmic impact increases with the size of the projectile. The greatest risk is associated with objects large enough to perturb the Earth's climate on a global scale by injecting large quantities of dust into the stratosphere. Such an event could depress temperatures around the globe, leading to massive loss of food crops and possible breakdown of society. Such global catastrophes are qualitatively different from other more common hazards that we face (excepting nuclear war), because of their potential effect on the entire planet and its population. Past collisions with comets may have thrown enough dust into the Earth's atmosphere to have caused the extinction of some species of plants and animals, among them the dinosaur.

Filipino First. The first daily—and first pro-Filipino—newspaper in English in the country was the *Philippines Herald*. It came out with its first issue on August 8, 1920, through the initiative of future Philippine president Manuel L. Quezon.

WORD WATCH

Paper (pay pehr) : from the French *papier*, 'paper,' which in turn came from the Latin *papyrus*, a plant native to Egypt and the surrounding countries.

PDI – Aug. 10, 2001

GLOBE TELECOM RECEIVES BAYANTRADE AWARD

Globe Telecom received BayanTrade's award for "Highest Value Pass Through for e-Bidding" during the eMarketPlace's first anniversary. Value pass through for eBidding events refers to the value of transactions made through BayanTrade's eBidding service. Shown are (from left) United Laboratories Inc. chair Joselito Campos Jr., Aboitiz Equity Ventures COO Erramon Aboitiz, trade secretary Manuel A. Roxas II, Globe Telecom procurement officer Rafael Llave, BayanTrade chair Jaime Augusto Zobel de Ayala and BayanTrade CEO Carol Carreon.

Confab on IT at Megatrade

TRAVERSING the limits of time and distance, connecting homes to school and schools to the world is what E-ducation Tech 2001 is all about. It will be held on Aug. 10-12 at the Megatrade Hall, SM Megamall, Mandaluyong City. E-ducation Tech 2001 highlights the country's developmental thrust of optimized learning through instructional technology. The organizer is Meeting Points International Inc. (MPII) located at Suite 202 Veca Building, Pasong Tamo cor. Estrella Avenue, Makati City with tel. 895-5735/895-2363.

BITS & Clips

PDC seminar, part 2

THE PARAÑAQUE Dental Chapter is inviting all interested dentists to its second scientific seminar titled "Live Show... Part II", an all ortho day. This seminar will be held at Asian Center-Skyline at Filinvest Corporate Center Alabang on Aug. 12. Registration starts 7:30 a.m. Raffle draws include three preceptorship grants worth P70,000 each. For inquiries, call Dr. Carlos B. Melo at 809-1678 and 809-1670; Dr. Florizel Villaflores, 820-2356; Dr. Rose Birosel, 837-2566; Dr. Mikko Mendoza/Dr. Raquel C. Gabriel at 809-3278.

RP hosts neonatal meet

THE PHILIPPINES will host the 4th Asia-Pacific regional meeting of the International Society for Neonatal Screening (APRM-ISNS) on Oct. 17-19 at the Edsa Shangri-La Hotel, Mandaluyong City. With the theme "Newborn Screening in the Asia Pacific Region: New Century, New Goals, New Opportunities," this event will feature discussions of research experiences from renowned experts and scientists, oral and poster presentations from throughout the region and panel discussions on a variety of important newborn screening issues and concerns. The deadline for submission of abstracts, hotel reservations and pre-registration have been set by the local organizing committee on Aug. 21. Direct all inquiries to the convention secretariat, 4th Asia Pacific Regional Meeting of the International Society on Neonatal Screening c/o The Institute of Human Genetics, National Institutes of Health, University of the Philippines, Manila, P.O. Box 297 (MCPO), 1000 Manila, Philippines, or call (632) 302-1626, fax (632) 526-9997, e-mail newbornasia@mydestiny.net, website: www.newbornasia.com.

More benefits for single parents

LABOR MANAGEMENT FORUM

Josephus B. Jimenez

WHILE the economy is in a recession and the cost of doing business is rising, the government is again adding another burden to employers. What is the stand of Ecop and PCI on this? While the wage issue is raging, let's not forget that workers also enjoy non-wage benefits that help them cope with the high cost of living.

Human resources managers attending the Personnel Management Association of the Philippines assembly on Friday were presented a copy of Republic Act 8972, otherwise known as the "Solo Parents Welfare Act of 2000." The general reaction was of surprise because the law was not given the due publicity it deserved. The law imposed too many obligations on employers that businessmen did not know.

True to form until his last days in Malacañang, President Joseph Estrada approved this law favoring solo parents on Nov. 7, 2000 at the height of his impeachment trial. Signed by then House Speaker Manny Villar and then Senate President Frank Drilon, the law extended substantial benefits to single parents and most of these benefits were to be borne by employers. Intrinsically, the law may be good. But then again, the government imposes a burden to business without giving it the courtesy of a prior notice.

Who is a single parent?

Under the law, a single parent includes a woman who gives birth as a result of rape, also widows and widowers, spouses whose husbands or wives are in jail, those whose partners are mentally incapacitated, spouses after legal separation or annulment, those who were abandoned by their spouses, as well as unmarried fathers or mothers who have custody of their children.

The rights accruing in favor of single parents shall also be granted to any family member who assumes the responsibility of head of the family as a result of death, abandonment, disappearance or prolonged absence of the parents. The rights, however, shall cease when the single parent remarries or has ceased to be a solo parent by other means.

Rights of single parents

The law provides that a comprehensive package of social development and welfare services for solo parents and their families are to be developed by an interagency group composed of the DSWD, DOLE, DOH, DECS, CHED, Tesda, NHA and DILG, with the DSWD as lead agency. The package shall include livelihood development services, counseling, parents' effectiveness services, critical incidence stress debriefing and special projects.

Moreover, single parents should be provided by employers a flexible work schedule to help them cope with the task of parenting alone, although there is a caveat to uphold productivity. Employers are also prohibited from acts of discrimination against single parents on the matter of hiring, firing, wages, training, discipline and layoffs. But look, the law itself discriminates in favor of single parenthood, denying these benefits from those who work hard to keep their family intact.

Leave and other benefits

The most costly for employers is the "single-parent leave" of seven working days every year, in addition to an existing five-day service incentive leave, the seven-day paternity leave and the maternity leave for pregnant women, which is two weeks prior and four weeks after delivery and CBA-provided vacation and sick leaves.

The single parent law also grants education benefits in the form of scholarship programs and non-formal education programs. It also grants housing benefits to single parents. This is very Erap-like, the fixation on housing and a special love for single parents. The law also grants comprehensive health care programs for solo parents and their children on top of Philhealth or Medicare.

We can never fault the government for manifesting special concern for single parents. There is a concept in political law and even in labor law called "parents patriae," which simply means that the state shall act as caring and nurturing parents to give special care to the marginalized sectors in society, such as workers, the handicapped, senior citizens, women, minors and even the homeless, the jobless and other underprivileged groups.

This is in keeping with the US-borrowed maxim usually attributed to the late President Magsaysay: "He who has less in life should have more in law." This law seeks to compensate a single parent for the deprivations he or she has to face in life. The problem is, whenever the government is in a giving mood, it does not have the means to pay the cost.

Who should pay the bill?

So, if the state wishes to be compassionate, why shift the financial burden of compassion to employers? If the government is in the mood to give benefits, why compel the business sector to bear the cost when no prior consultation, much less consent, is obtained from employers?

If Estrada wanted to give housing to single mothers and single fathers, why is the business community always being asked to foot the bill? Employers have a thousand other labor costs to bear, wage increases, Ecola and taxes to make the cost of business more prohibitive. Is the government pushing businessmen to closures and layoffs?

No surprises, please

What HR managers are asking is just prior notice and due consultation. When the government passed the single parent law, employers were not consulted. Consultations are usually done post facto and only for the formulation of implementing guidelines. This is not acceptable to the HR managers. Ecop and PCI should be heard on this, too.

If the government wants a higher degree of compliance, it is high time that it practices the principle of participation as a means to enhance the effectiveness of laws. If the government wants citizens' involvement, it should hear first what the people have to say and not issue out directive from ivory towers. A little courtesy, that's all that is being asked. And we don't need to float a paper boat in Pasig to make that clear.

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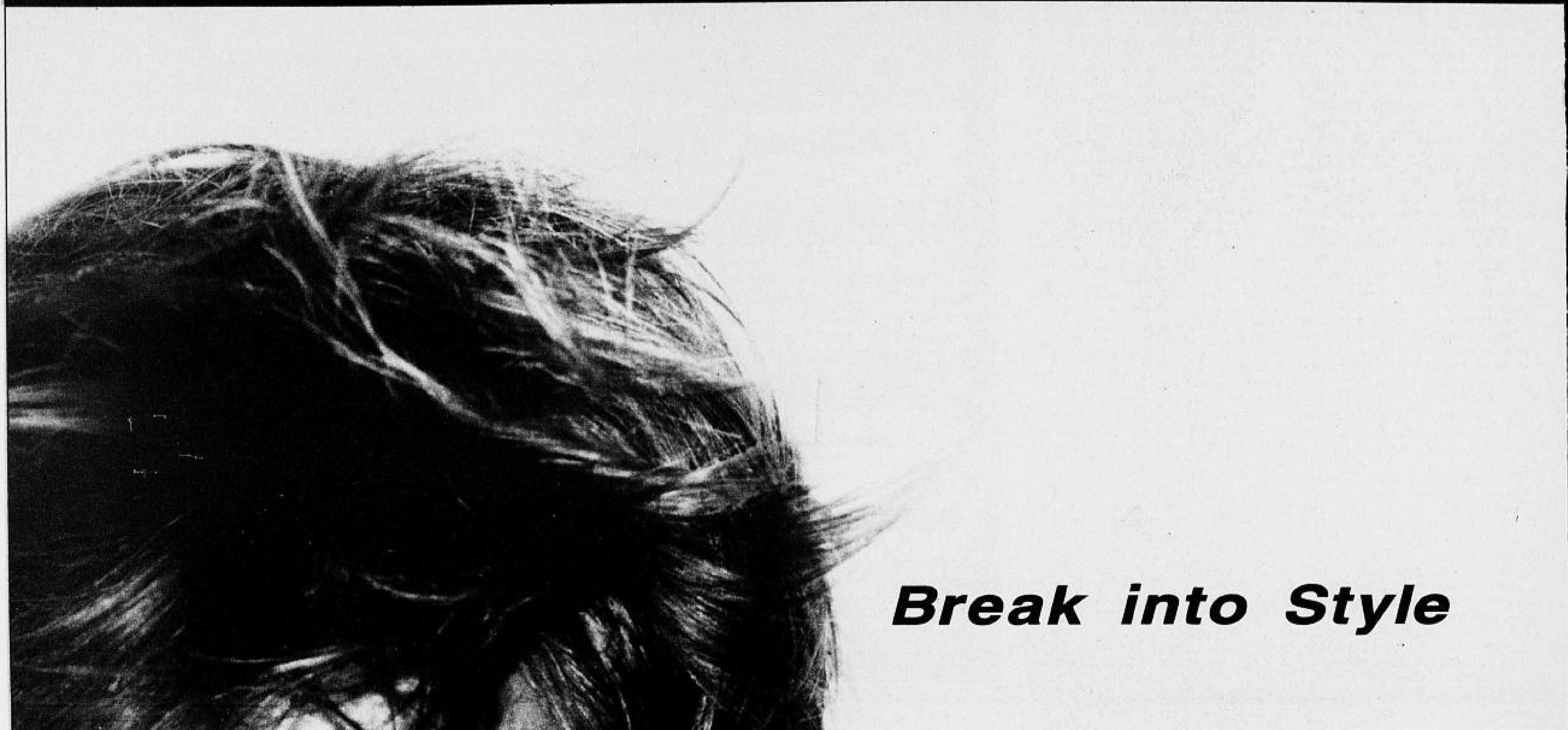
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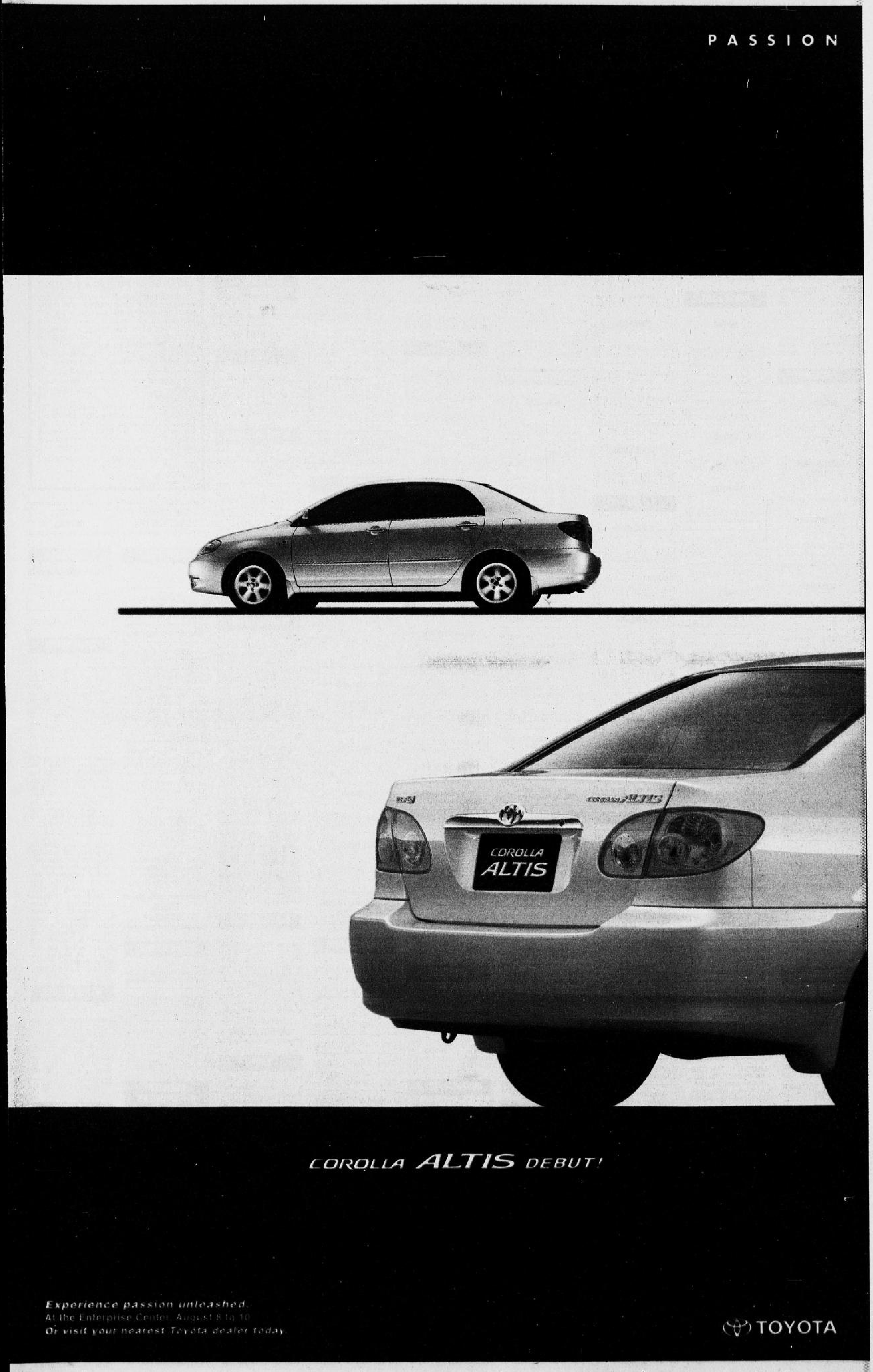
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Interested parties may inspect the aforesaid items at the BSP Main Complex, A. Mabini cor. P. Ocampo Sr. Streets, Malate, Manila before the bidding date.

Forms and further information may be obtained from the Committee's Executive Officer, Ms. Aurora S. Pascual, Administrative Services Department, Room 111, Ground Floor, 5-Storey Building, BSP, A. Mabini cor. P. Ocampo Sr. Streets, Malate, Manila, Telephone No. 524-98-98.

(Sgd.) **MELPIN A. GONZAGA**
Chairman

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NOTICE is given that the estate of the late **Sinforoso V. Sanchez, Jr.** has been extrajudicially settled by his heirs on August 1, 2001 under Doc#107; Page#23; Book#XLVIII; Series of 2001 before Not. Pub. Atty. Henry B. Adasa of Mla., M.M.
(PDI-Aug. 3, 10 & 17, 2001)

Notice is hereby given that the estate of the late DIONISIO S. BODOSO has been extrajudicially settled among his heirs before Notary Public Harold Elmo O. Banzuela of Pasig City on 6/25/01 w/ Doc#488 Page#98 Book I Series of 2001 PDI 8/3,10,17,2001

Notice is hereby given that the estate of the late JOSE ABAD had been extrajudicially settled through a Deed of Extrajudicial Settlement with the sale executed on Aug. 19, 1999, in San Antonio, Zambales, duly notarized on same date before Atty. Germana Antipolo-Bactan, a notary public for and in San Antonio, Zambales, and entered in her Notarial Register as Doc. No. 165, Page No. 34, Book No. XIX, Series of 1999.
(PDI-Aug. 10,17 & 2, 2001)

NOTICE OF LOSS

Notice is given on the loss of the following PETRON CORP. Stock Cert. SN's 108114, 774150, 1303605, 1519949, 421473, 774148, 1303604 and 1519947 under the name of RICO M. DAKIS or HILDA P. DAKIS were lost.
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PERSONAL

NOVENA TO THE MOST SACRED HEART OF JESUS AND SAINT JUDE

May the most Sacred Heart of Jesus be praised, blessed, loved, adored and glorified throughout the whole world now and forever. Amen.

Most Sacred Heart of Jesus. Pray for us.

St. Jude, worker of miracles, helper for the helpless, pray for us.

Say nine times a day for nine days. Prayer will be answered by the eighth day, it has never failed.

Thank you very much, Most Sacred Heart of Jesus and St. Jude, for favor granted.

THANK YOU SACRED HEART OF JESUS AND IMMACULATE HEART OF MARY

THANK YOU HOLY SPIRIT

Republic of the Philippines
Department of Agriculture
Bureau of Fisheries and Aquatic Resources
880 Quezon Ave., Quezon City, Metro Manila 3008
Tel. Nos. 372-50-57 * 372-50-43
Fax. Nos. 372-50-48 * 372-50-42

INVITATION TO PREQUALIFY AND TO BID

The Bureau of Fisheries and Aquatic Resources-Fisheries Resource Management Project (BFAR-FRMP), Department of Agriculture (DA) invites qualified bidders/suppliers to participate in the bidding of the following items not later than 2:00 PM on **August 27, 2001**.

ITEM/S TO BID:

9 units	-	Airconditioners
11 units	-	Portable Copier
1000 copies	-	CRM Flip Chart

. Pre-bid conference will be held at the FRMP Conference Room, 880 Estuar Bldg., Quezon Avenue, Quezon City on **August 20, 2001** at 2:00 PM.

Submission and opening of bids will be on **August 27, 2001** at FRMP Conference Room.

Bid forms together with complete specifications may be obtained from Property Section.

Interested bidders are required to submit the following requirements upon securing bidding forms: photocopies of Business License, Certificate of Registration/DTI, latest audited Financial Statement, latest Income Tax Return (original copies to be shown for authentication purposes).

This Office reserves the right to reject any or all bids without offering any reason, waive any required formality and award the contract to any bidder whose proposal as evaluated by PBAC is the most advantageous to the government. The PBAC assumes no obligation to compensate or indemnify the bidders for any expenses or loss that may be incurred in the preparation of bids, or does it guarantee that an award will be made.

(Sgd.) **MARCIANO F. CARREON III**
Project Director

(PDI -- Aug. 10, 2001)

SBMA DISPOSAL COMMITTEE
SBMA Bldg. 235, Barryman St., Subic Bay Freeport Zone Philippines
(6347) 252-4214/4124 Fax: (6347) 252-4284

INVITATION TO BID
FOR THE SALE OF ASSORTED DISPOSABLE/SURPLUS
AND OTHER SCRAP MATERIALS 'AS IS, WHERE IS'

I. ITEM DESCRIPTION/LOCATION	SUBMISSION AND OPENING OF BIDS
a) Unserviceable transformers and other scrap materials at Bldgs. 709, 877 and 8122	**August 30, 2001**, Thursday, 2:00 p.m.
b) Weather protection sheds and sandblasting hooper at SRF and NSD compound	**August 30, 2001**, Thursday, 3:00 p.m.
c) Abandoned finished products and other properties by Korea Subic-manufacturer of fishing rods at NavMag	**August 30, 2001**, Thursday, 4:00 p.m.

II. Only accredited buyers are requested to submit the following Pre-qualification documents at the Procurement and Property Management Department (PPMD), Room 201, 2nd Floor, Bldg. 255, SBMA, Subic Bay Freeport Zone.
1. Certificate of Accreditation as Scrap Hauler from Trade & Tourism Group of PPMD, SBMA.
2. Latest Income Tax Return (TTR 2000) of the bidder or copies of Audited Financial Statement of the Company and Certification of Cash Deposit by a reputable bank.

III. Deadline for submission of the Pre-qualification Papers is on **August 16, 2001**, Thursday, (5:00 pm). No extension.

IV. Pre-Bid Conference and Issuance of Bid Forms (P100.00 per set) will be on **August 23, 2001**, Thursday (3:00 p.m.)

V. Bid Bond is required in the form of cash or manager's check equivalent to ten percent (10%) of the total bid price in favor of SBMA.

VI. Sealed Bid in prescribed form shall be received on the above cited date at the Procurement and Property Management Department (PPMD), Room 201, 2nd Floor, Bldg. 255, SBMA, Subic Bay Freeport Zone.

VII. For other information, inquiries and/or request for inspection, Call Tel. No. (047) 252-4214/4283 c/o Danny Sanchez, Secretariat/TWG.

VIII. SBMA reserves the right to reject any or all bids, to waive any informality found therein or to reject/accept such bids as may be deemed most advantageous to SBMA.

Done this 9th day of August.

(Sgd.) **Capt. VICTORIA L. MAMON**
SDA for Operation
Chairman, Disposal Committee

(PDI--August 10, 11, 12, 2001)

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OFFICE OF THE PRESIDENT
NATIONAL HOUSING AUTHORITY

02 August 2001

NOTICE OF ACCREDITATION/CLASSIFICATION

Notice is hereby issued that the following Survey Consultants have been accredited/classified by the National Housing Authority to undertake its survey work requirements up to December 2002, to wit:

Category A - can do projects costing above P500,000.00
1. Vircon Survey Services
2. Carteza Surveying
3. R. C. Siccion Surveying
4. E. M. Cruz Realty
5. E. De las Alas Surveying

Category B - can do projects costing P100,001.00 to P500,000.00
1. Geo Technical Surveys
2. Geo Link Surveying
3. Metroland Surveying
4. Villamater Surveying Office
5. H. S. Pada Surveying
6. D. L. Paril Surveying
7. Golden Triangle Surveying

Category C - can do projects costing up to P100,000.00
1. A. P. Angeles Surveying
2. Gamma Surveying
3. W. V. Baldovieso Surveying
4. R. G. Montano Surveying
6. Algeco Realty and Services
7. Geotron Engineering Works

This accreditation/classification is without prejudice to a continuing accreditation/classification for expansion of the List of Accredited Survey Consultants.

(Sgd.) **JOSEPH PETER S. SISON**
Assistant General Manager
Chairman, Prequalification, Evaluation
and Award Committee for Survey Contracts

(PDI - Aug. 10, 2001)

Republic of the Philippines
DAVAO CITY WATER DISTRICT
Km. 5, J.P. Laurel Ave., Davao City, Philippines
Tel. No. 221-9400 (connecting all departments)
Tel. Nos. 221-82-18 to 19 (Regional Training Center, Madapo Hill, Davao City)
Fax: (82) 226-4885

INVITATION TO PRE-QUALIFY/APPLY FOR ELIGIBILITY AND TO BID

All interested contractors with category PCAB D and above, and IAC Special Classification on Well Drilling or Water Supply are invited to participate in the bidding for the **EXPLORATORY/WELL DRILLING OF TWO (2) PRODUCTION WELLS**, using Rotary Method, here in Davao City.

The Appoved Budget for the Contract (ABC) of each well, and its location are as follows:

1)	San Isidro, Bunawan —	Php 2,433,816.83
2)	Production Well # 37, — back of Greenland Subd., Dumoy, Toril District	Php 3,154,941.52

Pre-C/eligibility requirements are available at the DCWD BAC-B office starting **August 10 to 16, 2001** during its business hours.

Deadline for the submission of Pre-C documents	-	**August 20, 2001**
Issuance of Plans	-	**Sept. 06, 2001**
Pre-bid Conference	-	**Sept. 13, 2001 at 3:00 p.m.**
Bidding	-	**Sept. 20, 2001 at 3:00 p.m.**

The DCWD reserves the right to reject any or all bids, to waive any informalities therein, or to award the project to a bid that is considered most advantageous to the agency.

(Sgd.) **ENGR. WILFRED G. YAMSON**
Chairperson, Bids & Awards Committee-B

(PDI -- Aug. 8, 10 & 15, 2001)

UNIVERSITY OF THE PHILIPPINES LOS BAÑOS
College, Laguna

INVITATION TO PRE-QUALIFY AND BID

The University of the Philippines Los Baños (UPLB) invites interested parties to submit sealed bids for the public bidding of the supply, delivery of equipment re: *Fiber Optic Cabling Project-Phase II:*

Six (6) units 3COM SuperStack II 3300FX (3C16982), two (2) units 3COM SuperStack II Switch Matrix Cable (3C16965), thirty nine (39) units 3COM ISOLan Optic Transceiver AUI-FO (ST) (3C1680-5); and supply, delivery and installation of laboratory equipment, i.e:

One (1) unit PCR machine, One (1) unit Photo documentation, One (1) unit UV transilluminator for the Institute of Plant Breeding.

Interested parties may secure the checklist of pre-qualification requirements from the Supply & Property Management Office (SPMO), UPLB, College, Laguna. Pre-qualification documents shall be received by SPMO, UPLB until 4:00 p.m. **August 16-23, 2001.**

Only pre-qualified bidders shall be allowed to secure bid documents from SPMO, UPLB on **August 24-30, 2001** and participate in the pre-bid conference to be held on **August 31, 2001** at the Supply and Property Management Office at 10:00 a.m.

Only pre-qualified bidders shall be allowed to submit separate technical and financial proposals until 10:00 a.m. **September 3, 2001**, the time for opening of sealed bids at the Supply and Property Management Office, UPLB.

The UPLB reserves the right to reject any or all bids without offering any reason, waive any defect therein and make an award to the bidder whose proposal is most advantageous to the UPLB. The UPLB likewise assumes no obligation for whatever losses that may be incurred by the bidders in the preparation of the bids, nor does it guarantee that the award shall be made.

(Sgd.) **DR. TERESITA M. ESPINO**
Chair, PBAC

(PDI - Aug. 10, 2001)

OBITUARIES

Manila Advertising

SIMON O. YU

(YU SIU SIONG)

Born on January 26, 1921
Peacefully joined our Lord on August 6, 2001
at the age of 80.

His bereaved wife **Juanita**; children **Wilson** and **Rita, Olivia** and **Arsenio**; grandchildren **Alain Arnold, Windy** and **Jerrick Nathaniel, Wilbert, Carol Geraldine, Pierre Olivér**; great grandchildren **Justin William, Julianne Annika**; brothers, sisters, nephews, nieces, other relatives and friends request the pious readers to pray for the eternal repose of his soul.

His remains lie in state at La Funeraria Paz, Ascension-1, 1501 C.M. Recto Ave. corner Tomas Mapua St., Sta. Cruz, Manila.

Interment will be on Sunday, August 12, 2001, leaving La Funeraria Paz at 9:00 a.m. proceeding to Manila Memorial Park, Dasmariñas, Cavite.

MESSAGE OF THANKS

We, the family of the late

BENITO YAO HAW KUN

May 10, 1907 — July 31, 2001

wish to convey our sincere gratitude and appreciation to all those who sent condolences and flowers, attended the funeral rites and comforted us in so many ways during our time of bereavement.

Thank you very much.

"Whoever finds his life will lose it, and whoever loses his life for My sake will find it."

Matthew 10:39

Eternal life will swallow up that
which can die. God made us for this
very reason and he has given us
the spirit as a guarantee that
we will live again.

2 Cor. 5:4-5

In Loving Memory
on the
Second Death Anniversary
of

FLORENCIA S. MALIXI - SANTIAGO

(March 21, 1937 - August 10, 1999)
of Abucay, Bataan

Loving husband **Norby**; her daughter **Nini**; son-in-law **Jose Luis Paguio**; her only sister **Chita M. Bascara**; request the pious readers to remember Florencia in their prayers.

In Loving Memory

of

RODOLFO N. PELAEZ

(January 3, 1912 — August 10, 1980)

and

ELSA P. PELAEZ

(August 10, 1910 — August 22, 1992)

FOUNDERS, LICEO DE CAGAYAN UNIVERSITY
Cagayan de Oro City

Masses will be offered at hte following Churches in Cagayan de Oro City on August 10 and August 22, 2001:

Church	Time
Mt. Carmel Church	6:00 AM
Sacred Heart Church	6:00 AM
San Agustin Cathedral	5:00 AM
Divine Shepherd Memorial Gardens	8:00 AM

The family requests those whose lives they touched to say a prayer for their eternal rest.

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OBITUARIES

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BAYANI L.C. REYES

of Montalban, Rizal

Passed away in the Grace of the Lord on August 8, 2001 at the age of 80.

The bereaved family, wife **ILUMINADA BAUTISTA**; children **VIRGILIO** and **SUSAN**, **VIRGINIA**, **REYNALDO** and **EMCEE**, **RAUL** and **LEONORE**; grandchildren and great grandchild, relatives and friends request the pious readers to pray for the eternal repose of his soul.

His remains lie in state at 89 Xavierville Ave., Loyola Heights, Quezon City, Metro Manila.

Cremation services will be on Sunday, August 12, 2001 at 1:00 p.m. at the Loyola Memorial Park, Crematorium, Loyola Memorial Park, Marikina after the 11:00 a.m. Mass.

MIGUEL ANGEL YSMAEL PEREZ-RUBIO

Died in the Grace of our Lord on August 9, 2001.

His children Angela and Joseph; their mother Josefina Reyes; granddaughter Isabella; parents Miguel and Luisa; brothers Carlos and Juan Antonio; sister Luli; nephews and nieces, request the pious readers to pray for the eternal repose of his soul.

His cremated remains will lie in state at the Capilla de la Virgen in Santuario de San Antonio, McKinley Road, Forbes Park, Makati City.

The funeral Mass will be held at 9:00 a.m. on Saturday, August 11, 2001.

Interment will follow immediately after at the Loyola Memorial Park, Marikina City.

Our Beloved Mother & Grandmother

AMBROSIA PULIDO-LABRADOR

Died peacefully on August 8, 2001
at the age of 87.

Her bereaved children **ROMEO & AMELIA UMALI, DANIEL JR. & IRENE JOVEN, JULIET & SALVADOR LUNA, ZENAIDA & ANGEL LAZARO III, TITUS (†) & HERMINIA ILAGAN, MINDA & DAN LUCERO**; grandchildren, other relatives and friends request the pious readers to pray for the eternal repose of her soul.

Her remains lie in state at Arlington Memorial Chapels, 12 G. Araneta Ave., Quezon City.

Interment will be on Sunday, August 12, 2001, at the Loyola Memorial Park, Parañaque.

Join us in bridging

Honorato "Noring" E. Encarnacion

to our Lord, Jesus.

He was brought together with his Maker on the 8th of August, 2001.

We request for prayers for the repose of his soul conjointly with our Mama **MONINA CASTAÑEDA** and his children **Mazie** and **Steve Armstrong**, **Benjie** and **CB**, **Lala** and **Edmon Liao**, **Christine** and **Bryan Walston**, **Angeline**, **Jay** and **Carmela**, **Dea**, **Gemma** and **Deo**; together with their grandchildren **Lope**, **Carlos**, **Josh**, **Job**, **Jonas**, **Joseph**, **Karelle** and **Khael** and his bounty of relatives and good friends.

His mortal body lies in state at Holy Trinity Memorial Chapels, Dr. A. Santos Avenue, Parañaque City.

In lieu of flowers, Papa requested that contributions be made to the *Tuloy sa Don Bosco* Street children project.

Cremation will be at the Manila Memorial Park Crematorium on Monday, 13th August, 2001 after the 8:00 a.m. Mass in St. Andrew's Chapel, Holy Trinity.

ERRATUM

In the obituary of

SOCORRO SISON SURLA

published August 9, 2001, the last sentence should read as follows: "Interment will be at the Manila Memorial Park, Sucat Road, Parañaque City on Tuesday, August 14, 2001, after the 9:00 A.M. mass."

TERESA "Tessie" DE LEON BADILLA

October 15, 1934 — August 08, 2001

Her children **SONNY, BESSIE, BILLY, LYN, BING, RENE, BOBBY, MARITES**; sons, daughters-in-law, grandchildren, sisters, relatives and friends request the pious reader to pray for the eternal repose of her soul.

The body lies in state at the Holy Trinity Memorial Chapels, Sucat, Parañaque City.

Funeral Mass will be on Sunday, August 12, 2001 at 9:00 a.m. at the Manila Memorial Park Crematorium Chapel, Sucat, Parañaque City.

If you're an apostle, death will be
a good friend who helps you on your way.
The Way, Blessed Josemaria Escriva

ALELI GAMALINDA KLIATCHKO

Peacefully joined her Creator on August 9, 2001
at the age of 66.

Her bereaved husband **Jake**; loving children and in-laws **Jacobson** and **Monet**, **Jerry**, **Anne** and **Jebe**, **Mariel** and **James**, **Lala**, **Nessie** and **Butch** (†); grandchildren **Carl**, **Giolo**, **Chem**, **Annica**, **Nick**, **Jaime**, **Mariella**, **Jacob** and **Alvaro** (†); relatives and friends, request the pious readers to pray for the eternal rest of her soul.

Her remains lie in state at the St. Jerome Emiliani Church, Alabang, Muntinlupa City.

Funeral Mass will be on August 11, 2001 at 8:00 a.m. at the St. Jerome Emiliani Church.

Interment will immediately follow at the Eternal Gardens Memorial Park, Baesa, Caloocan City.

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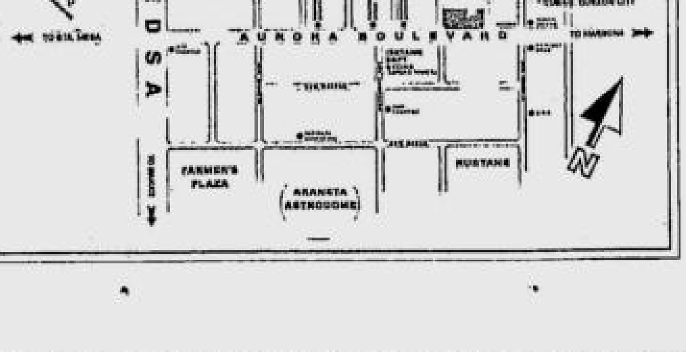


What we should know about official receipts

By Benjamin M. Gorospe III
SGV & Co.

TAX FILES

HOW often have you been asked: Do you need an official receipt when you hand in your cash either as payment for goods purchased or for services rendered?

Or worse, how many times have you requested for an official receipt after getting a mere 'cash slip' or a receipt of sorts, which looks anything but official?

These situations indicate that not a lot of business establishments deliberately under declare their income to lessen, if not altogether avoid, paying taxes (e.g. income tax, VAT, etc.).

The proprietors of these establishments may not be aware that there are laws on the issuance of receipts (e.g. official receipts, sales or commercial invoices, etc.) that provide for stiff penalties in case these laws are violated.

Obviously, at a time that the Bureau of Internal Revenue (BIR) struggles to meet its collection target, every peso that is due to it should be accounted for and collected. Since these laws help ensure that correct income is reported and correct taxes are paid, this is, thus, an opportune time to revisit such laws and its implementing rules.

Notice to the Public

Business establishments are required to put up a notice in a conspicuous area that they are required by law to issue an official receipt and should they fail to do so they may be fined, imprisoned, or both.

The sign should also include an invitation to the public to report a violation to the BIR. The sign, which should be 12 inches wide and 8 inches long, and should contain bold letters, must appear like this:

NOTICE TO THE PUBLIC:

THIS BUSINESS ESTABLISHMENT IS REQUIRED BY LAW TO ISSUE SALES/COMMERCIAL INVOICE/OFFICIAL RECEIPT. VIOLATION HEREOF IS PUNISHABLE BY FINE AND/OR IMPRISONMENT. PLEASE REPORT ANY VIOLATION TO THE BUREAU OF INTERNAL REVENUE.

(Issuance of sales/commercial invoice and/or official receipt is not required for every sale valued at P25 or below by a Non-VAT taxpayer)
—Commissioner of Internal Revenue

This requirement is mandated by Revenue Regulations No. 4-2000, which were issued last July 18, 2000. Under such regulations, this requirement also applies to those who are exercising a profession.

Hence, doctors, lawyers, engineers, and etc., who are making a living out of their professions are required to hang the above notice in their places of business.

Failure to put up the notice constitutes a violation of the rules. Hence, the BIR has every right to impose a penalty of up to P1,000 or cause the violator to be jailed for up to six months.

The BIR may even impose a fine and have the violator imprisoned.

Should the business establishment be owned by a corporation, a partnership or an association, the penalties shall be imposed on the following individuals, the president, a partner in a partnership, the general manager, the branch manager, officer-in-charge and/or employees responsible for the violation.

Who should issue ORs

All persons who should pay internal revenue taxes are required to issue an official receipt for each sale of merchandise or service valued at P25.00 or more. The receipts should have duplicate copies and contain the date of the transaction, quantity, unit cost and the description of the merchandise or the nature of the service.

Should the sale amount to P100 or more, the receipt should likewise show the name, business style and address of the buyer. If the buyer is VAT-registered, the receipt should likewise indicate the Tax Identification Number of the buyer.

After the receipt is issued, the buyer and the seller are required to keep the original and duplicate copies, respectively, for three years.

A person who fails or refuses to issue receipts may be fined an amount of at least P1,000 but not more than P50,000.

Aside from the fine, the violator will be jailed for at least two years but not more than four years. The issuance of receipt that does not reflect or contain all the required information will also be subject to penalties. The same penalties shall likewise be imposed on persons who commit the following acts:

1. Printing of receipts without authority from the BIR;

2. Printing of double or multiple sets of receipts; and

3. Printing or unnumbered receipts, not bearing the name, business style, TIN, and business address of the person or entity.

Authority to print

All persons engaged in business (whether VAT or Non-VAT registered) must secure a written authority from the BIR to print the receipts. Such authority is necessary before a printer can start printing the receipts and shall be granted only when the receipts indicate the following:

1) serial number;
2) name of the business;
3) business style;
4) TIN; and
5) business address.

However, before using the receipts, these should be registered with the Revenue District Office where the principal place of business of the taxpayer is located. The registration should be made within 30 days from the date of printing.

The registration of the receipts shall be evidenced by a BIR stamp on the authority to print as well as on the front cover, on the back of the middle receipt and on the back of the last receipt of the registered booklet.

The stamp shall be authenticated by the appropriate BIR officer.

Additional penalties

Aside from these penalties, the Tax Code provides for additional penalties if it can be shown that there was an attempt to evade taxes through non-issuance of receipts.

A person found guilty of attempting to evade taxes may be fined at least P30,000 but not more than P100,000.

The violator shall also be imprisoned for at least two years but not more than four years.

The severity of the penalties indicates that failure or refusal to issue a receipt is no laughing matter. We may not have heard of anybody getting jailed for failure or refusal to issue a receipt, but our awareness of the laws and its rules may persuade some businesses to issue receipts as a matter of policy.

Hence, bearing in mind that revenues are lost to the government every time a receipt is not issued, the next time you are asked "Do you need a receipt?" perhaps the most eloquent reply would be "Do you want to go to jail?"

See profits from eyewear franchise

LUXURY items are always the first to be cut off the consumers' budget but it appears that Filipinos do not consider eyewear a non-basic item.

Ricco Ocampo, owner of i2i Inc., says the company enjoyed a 50-percent increase in sales last year despite the depreciation of the peso and the slump in the economy.

The 103 outlets last year sold an average of 5,000 to 6,000 pairs of glasses a month, which can also be attributed to the low cost.

The average price of a pair of i2i glasses is only about P150. The most expensive would be about P229.

"Surprisingly, i2i did well last year despite the difficult economy," says Ocampo. On the other hand, sales the previous year hardly moved.

Ocampo adds that some smart consumers remove the lens and replace it with prescription lenses to cut costs.

i2i turned four last April and Ocampo says he plans to open 20 more kiosks within the year, primarily through franchising.

Of the 103 outlets, 38 are company owned and the rest are owned by franchisees.

The firm charges P75,000 for franchising fee but the franchisee is required to keep at least half a million pesos worth of inventory.

Ocampo says i2i purchases are based on impulse so the location of the kiosk is very crucial.

According to the company brochure, setting up an i2i kiosk requires at least eight square meters of space to carry all the fixtures, paraphernalia and merchandise.

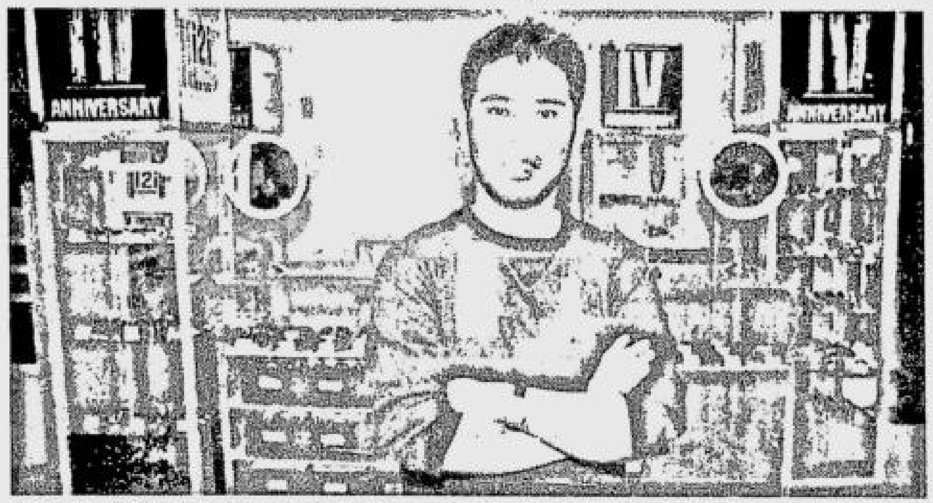
The location of the kiosk must be in a high traffic area, preferably inside malls or within a community of schools, offices and recreational establishments.

Each kiosk requires a supervisor, cashier, stock controller and a sales clerk.

Ocampo says sales have also been buoyed by the teenage set's propensity to buy more than one pair of dark glasses.

"Eyewear became a trend and people collected it," he says.

"Glasses in the Philippines has become an accessory unlike in other countries where people wear dark glasses for necessity," he adds. "It is a way for people to make *porma*. It is inexpensive to collect."



SALES of i2i eyewear surged at a time when the local economy dipped. ROMY HOMILLADA

He admits though that sales of i2i peaked during the first two years when outlet sold some 85,000 pairs of shades in one month.

But he says there is room for growth, especially outside Metro Manila. *(For franchise inquiries please call 9131395)*

Margie Quimpo-Espino

---

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Asians help market each other's goods

BY GIL C. CABACUNGAN JR.

ASEAN cooperation is extending beyond production of goods to including sharing of marketing strategies and helping each member country to tap market niches in the region.

Former Senator and Board of Investments chief Vicente Paterno said that it was ripe for Asean to broaden the scope of the Asean Industrial Cooperation (Aico) to cover not only production sharing but also marketing in view of the start of a regional trading block in 2003.

Paterno, one of the active officials of Asean during the group's formative years, said that focusing on marketing would ensure that the goods produced under the Aico scheme would be sold in the market where they are in demand.

The Asean Working Group for Industry Competitiveness held a two-day conference in Makati City last week.

Paterno said that when they conceptualized Aico in the 1980s (it was initially called the Asean Brand-to-Brand Complementation scheme and later renamed Asean Industrial Joint Venture), the main concern of the members then was how to maximize each of the member-countries' strengths to produce goods more efficiently and economically.

However, Paterno said the continuing trend toward globalization has made it imperative for Asean to ensure that the goods they produce in Aico are not only competitive with goods from China and other low-cost producers but that these are peddled in markets where they are in demand.

This time, Paterno said, Aico proponents should have the edge in knowing what the markets in the region want compared with their rivals.

Paterno said that getting the marketing edge meant knowing what each country in the Asean likes in terms of flavors or other product specifications and packaging.

He cited his experience as head of Philippine Seven Corp., owner of the 7-eleven 24-hour convenience store Philippine franchise, with its partnership with a leading Taiwanese retailer, the President Group.

Their partnership enabled both parties to share market insights in their respective retail markets. Paterno said Philseven realized that there was strong demand for ube flavored ice cream in Taiwan while the President Group also learned that most products here were sold in sachets.

"Our company started selling tube ice cream to Taiwan while the President has been importing sachet products from the Philippines for sale to countries with low disposable income," Paterno said.

Paterno said that companies might be selling the same product at the same cost, knowing what flavor or packaging the market wants would give Aico proponents the edge against rivals.

Paterno said the key issue in the early years of Aico was the size of the tariff discount to be granted by government to the private sector proponents in these pan-Asean production-sharing schemes. Based on current regulations, Aico proponents enjoy zero to 5 percent duties on their traded goods.

But with globalization, Paterno said Aico proponents, which are mostly multinational corporations, should not rely on government perks to push their projects but should use their extensive networks in the region to push these Aico products.

Aico is a pan-Asean industrial partnership agreement where multinational corporations are allowed to build their products in several factories in different countries in the region by sharing product components and shipping them at preferred duties.

Aico began in the late 1980s as Asean Industrial Joint Venture and Brand-to-Brand Complementation as a means to attract MNC to locate their production facilities in the region by enabling to maximize the cost advantages in each member country. The program was extended as a precursor of the Asean Free Trade Agreement by allowing participants to enjoy preferred duties ahead of the Asean trading block.

Under Aico, participants are allowed to ship their components to their subsidiaries in different countries in the region at duties of between zero percent and 5 percent.

Members of Asean are currently studying a proposal by Malaysia to extend Aico up to 2010 and grant duty-free status to intra-regional trade through the scheme.

The plan is expected to spur more interest in Aico with the start of the Asean Free Trade Area in 2003 when duties on the bulk of goods traded in the region are scheduled to fall to 5 percent and lower. Goods traded through Aico are charged duties of 5 percent or lower and Malaysia wants duties waived entirely to make the scheme still attractive even with Afta in effect.

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LIFESTYLE Trend Spotting C-1
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Leather goods store aims for the jugular and the global

NELIA Siggaoat

> Manel's, which used to sub-contract for Liz Claiborne, is fine-tuning its manufacturing standards and diversifying its line in a quest for the international market

By MARGIE T. ESTRELLA

FROM A SMALL shop specializing in saddles and cigarette pouches, Manel's has now expanded its line to include shoes, bags and other fine leather products.

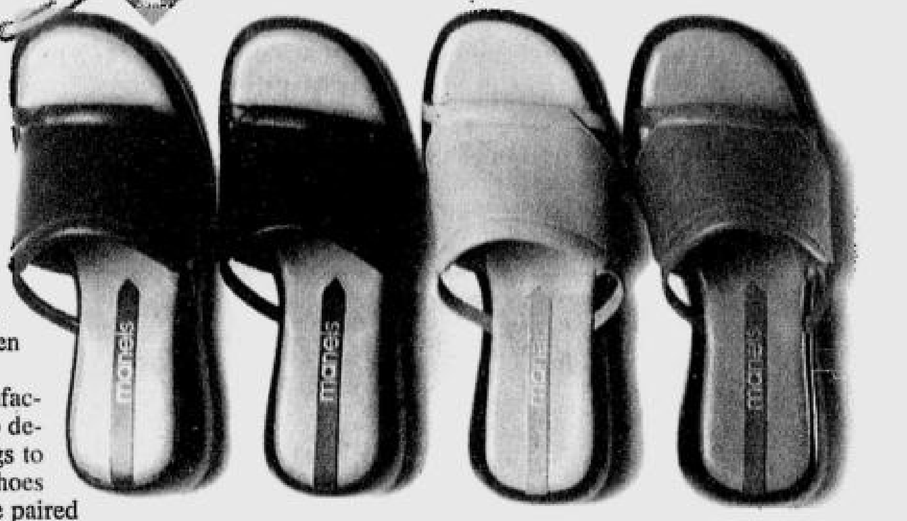
Owner Nelia Siggaoat was a professor of chemistry and physics at the Philippine Women's University before she became an entrepreneur.

One day, a client ordered a pair of shoes. That triggered in her an idea—broadening her product range. So Manel's began making shoes.

Sure enough, the endeavor was a big success and up to this day, shoes have been their biggest mainstay.

Since Manel's was familiar with manufacturing leather products, it also went into designing and making bags. It now belongs to one of the few stores that match their shoes and bags. So shoes for the office can be paired with the right tote or briefcase, and evening heels can be paired with a purse of similar style and color.

LEATHER/p.C3



LEATHER slip-ons in four colors

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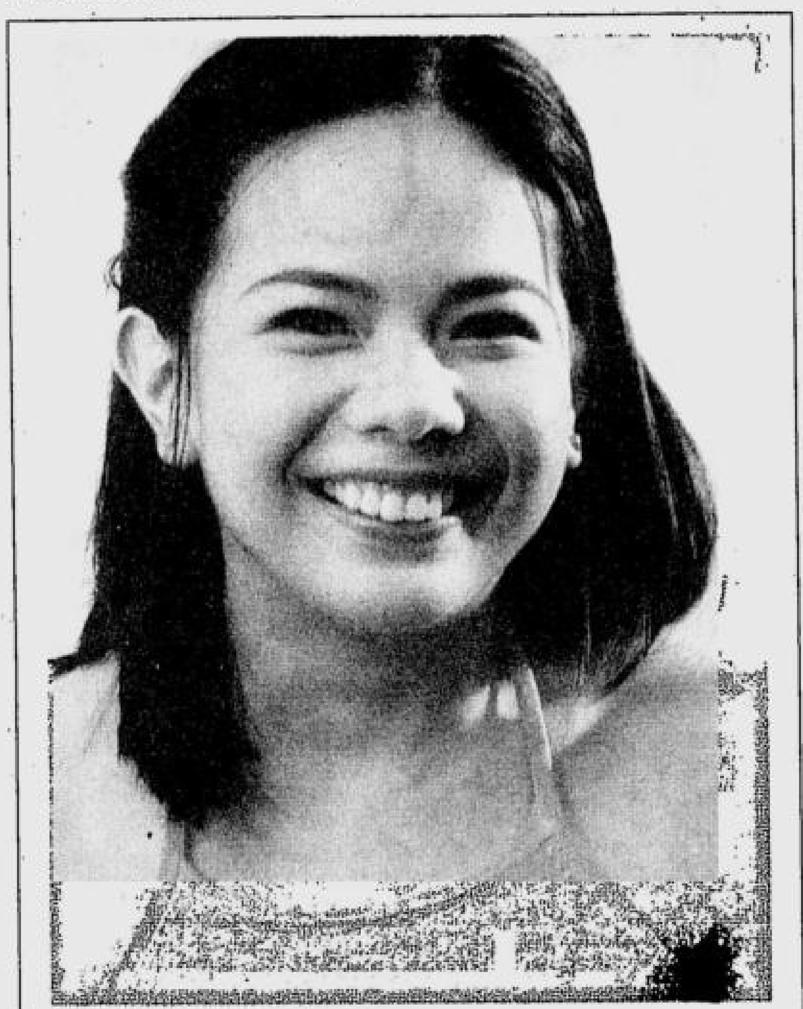
Makeup to match your mood

IN A DAY-LONG makeup session held at Manila Galleria Suites in Ortigas Center, supermodel turned professional makeup artist Lala Flores created three fabulous looks on 23-year-old Sharlyne Liu to mark Robinsons Department Store's (RDS) "Make Up Your Mind" Cosmetics Fair from Aug. 10-19.

To create the base for the makeup, Sharlyne's face was cleaned with a cream cleanser, the brows were trimmed and the skin evened out by sponging foundation and applying eye cream under the eyes. A light layer of liquid foundation was then applied.



Soft and sweet look

To achieve this look, stick to colors that create sweet impression, which is basically pink and all its shades. If you are on the darker or dusky side, you can still get away with pink by sticking to rose shades. The same goes for the lips, which can be highlighted by a layer of pink gloss or light shimmer. Go light on the eyes. The hair should also be styled according to the image, like letting the hair down naturally.

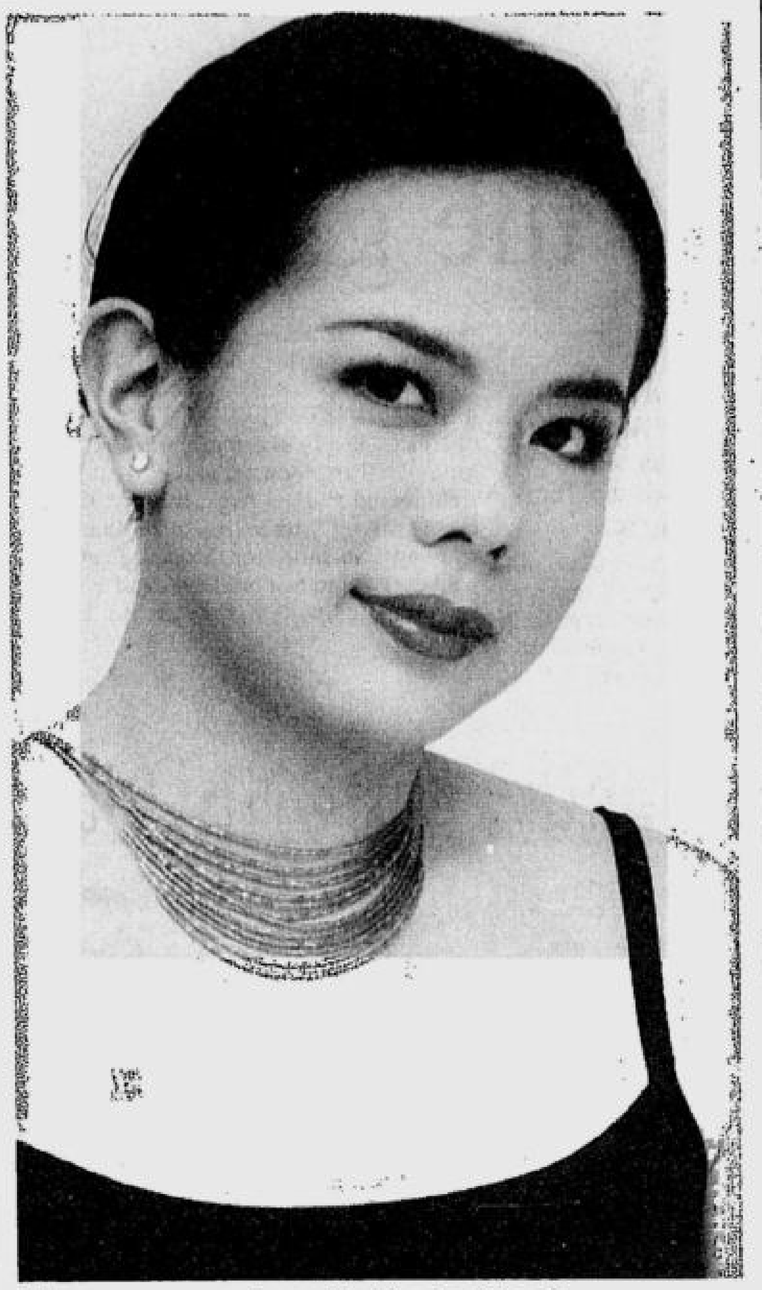
Her tools

Eyes: L'Oréal Crea Colour in Saphir

Cheeks: ZA Transpowder BR21, foundation by Maybelline 3-in-1 Express Make Up in sand

Lips: Revlon Colorstay Lipshine in Electric

Hair: Fudge Skyscraper Megahold Hair Lacquer



Glamorous and sophisticated look

Stick to the classic colors like browns and neutrals for the face, and the proper shades of red for the lips. The look should be softer and quieter than the sweet and funky moods, so colors should be blended and matched evenly to get that glamorous effect.

Again, the outfit and hair should match the mood. A well-made twist or bun at the back, clean and without the spikes, are perfect dos.

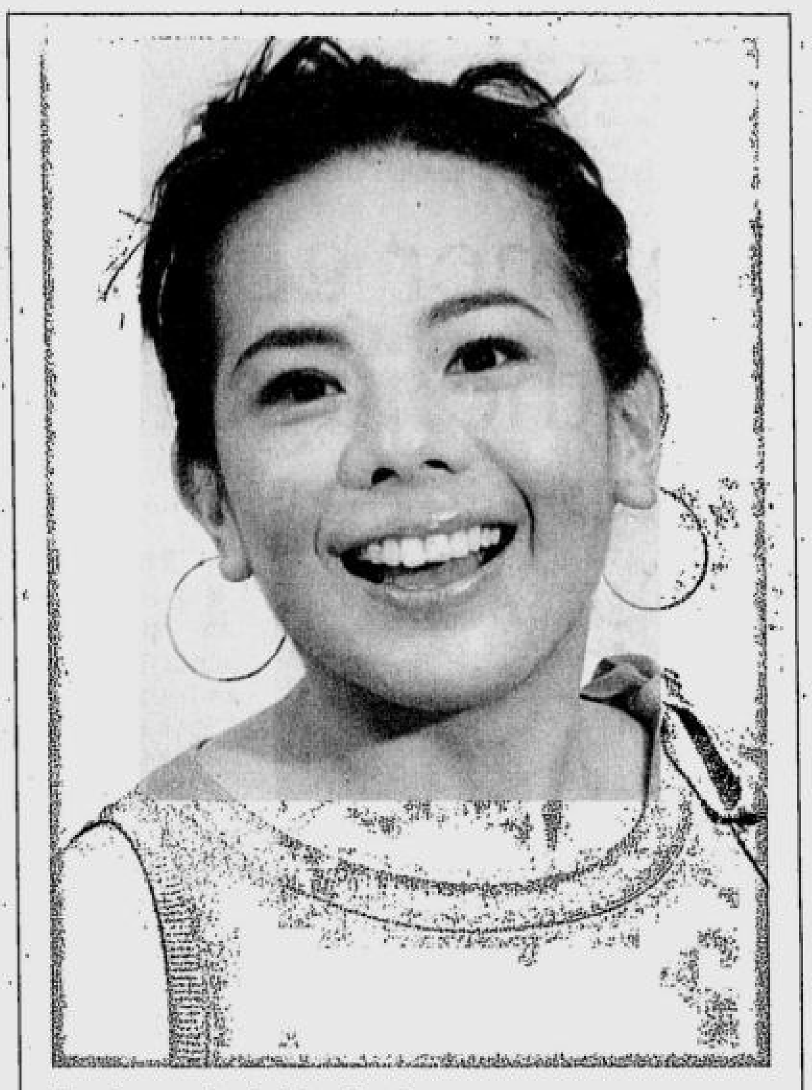
Her tools

Eyes: ZA Transpowder BR21

Cheeks: ZA Transpowder BR21

Lips: VMV Hypoallergenics Ambrosia Lipstick in Flores

Hair: Fudge Skyscraper Mega Hold Hair Lacquer



Funky and clubby look

It's time to use colors to achieve the funky, party girl look. The shades of the makeup will depend on the outfit. Use more shimmer. Cheeks can be made "dramatic." Twisting the hair upward with spikes and funky twists is a perfect style. Funky small hair accessories will heighten the look.

Her tools

Eyes: Ever Bilena Duo Shadow in Olive

Cheeks: ZA Transpowder GR71, foundation by L'Oréal Quick Stick in Natural Beige

Lips: MAC Lip Glass in Matte Nico

Hair: Fudge Skyscraper Mega Hold Hair Lacquer

MODEL: SHARLYNE LIU
PHOTOS BY JAO MAPA
HAIR AND MAKE-UP BY LALA FLORES

Sponsored by Clean and Clear, VMV Hypoallergenics, Ever Bilena, Kolours Hair Colouring Range and Splash Persona Aromatherapy and Dove, the RDS Cosmetics Fair boasts hundreds of local and international beauty and skin care products with discounts of up to 50 percent. Customers with at least P200 purchase are also entitled join the "Make Up Your Mind" raffle promo offering fabulous prizes.

Cosmetics for the Asian skin

THERE was a time when Asian women were held hostage by western cosmetic products whose colors hardly fit the Asian skin.

Caring Colours by Biokos Martha Tilaar, an imported and quality cosmetics line with skin-caring formulation especially made for Asian skin, is now in the Philippines.

It is under license by the Laboratories Martha Tilaar, Martins Berto France, to MB Philippines Lifetime Corp., exclusive distributor in the Philippines.

Caring Colours products contain aloe vera extracts, avocado oil, jojoba oil and Vitamin A to revitalize the skin, Vitamin E, and gingko biloba to retain skin moisture, elasticity and suppleness. It also has sun protection to shield the skin from harmful UV rays.

From its powder, foundation, eye shadow down to its lipstick line, Caring Colours has a wide range of colors and shades carefully formulated to complement and flatter Asian women's complexion and features, giving them a radiant, natural look that lasts through the day.

A must before applying lipstick is Caring Colours Lip Balm, a lip essential that moisturizes and makes your lips smooth and soft. Another must-have is the Smooth Lip Scrub that gently exfoliate the dead cells on the lips for healthy, supple, nourished lips.

Caring Colours' Dual Cake Foundation, a compact powder and foundation in one, gives its user a smooth satiny look, while the Line Smoothing Foundation is especially made to cover fine lines and blends to a flawless finish.

For eye makeup line, a trio of shades highlights and defines the contours of the eyes, and even moisturizes the delicate eye area.

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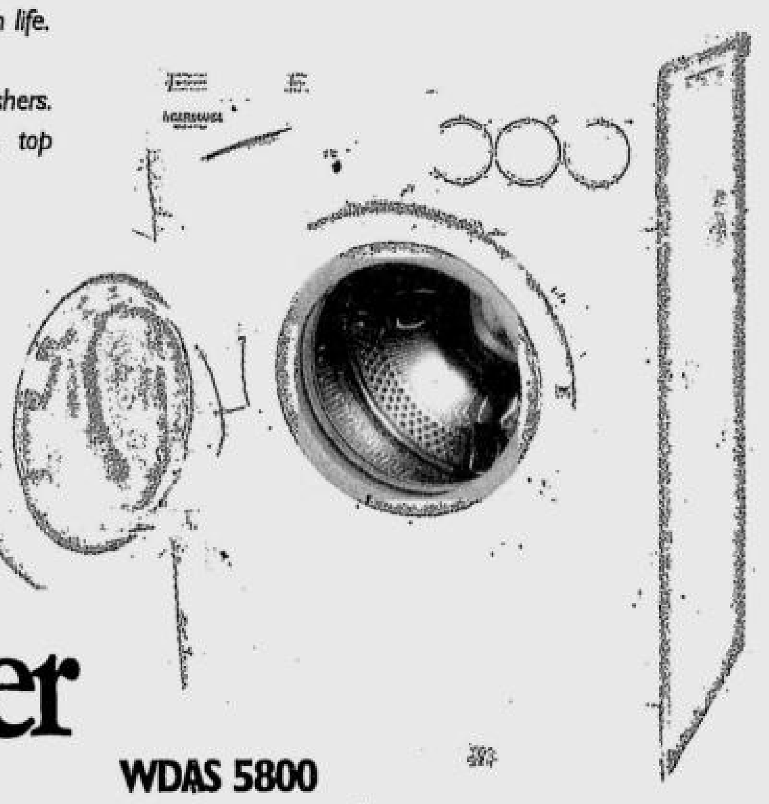

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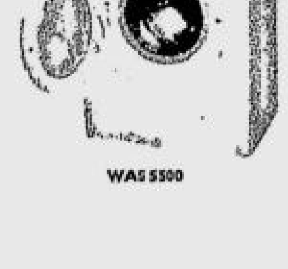

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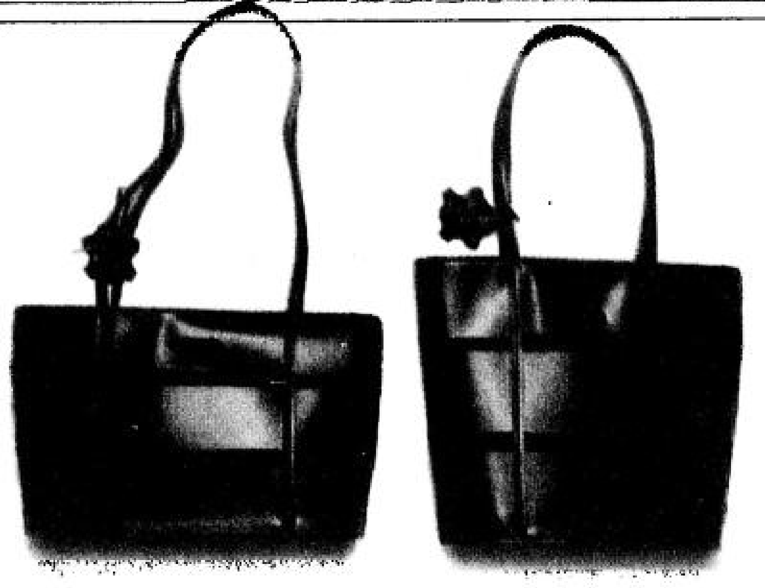


TAURINE handbags made of imported leather

Leather goods store aims for the jugular and the global

(From page C1)

Manel's used to be in the export market as well. It exported products and had been sub-contracted by major brands such as Liz Claiborne. For Liz Claiborne, it was commissioned to make small leather goods like jewelry boxes. However, export is not as thriving as it used to be. Exporting may not be in the works at the moment, but Manel's is quite busy renovating its stores and creating new lines.

Wide collection

Its collection include men's footwear, corporate leather goods, and of course, ladies' shoes. Ladies' shoes have several styles for different occasions—evening wear, casual and corporate. Right now, Manel's line is the Burnt Orange collection, which is made up of dyed leather of the same name. Children's shoes are also available, but seasonally, usually at the beginning of the schoolyear. Other colors Manel's wants to include soon are camel, ecru and lime green. With the color explosion in the apparel industry, it's only natural that shoes and bags follow suit.

Siggaoat determines what styles to make. She draws ideas from magazines and is always on the lookout for trends. She travels a lot to keep herself up to date, ever ready to assimilate new design inspirations. She is also busy with color forecasting and holding or participating in tradeshows, including a leather goods show in Hong Kong twice a year.

The products available at Manel's fall between affordable to expensive, depending of the material. For women's shoes, prices range from P800 to P2,000; for men's shoes, from P900 to P2,500. The shoes are very sturdy and built to last.

Siggaoat says customers jokingly complain that their shoes last so long that even when they have gone out of style, they can't help but keep them because they're still in good condition. The construction and the quality of the materials make all the difference. The materials include natural and man-made leather. There are also shoes made up of polyurethane, which are cheaper than leather, usually the more trendy shoes.

Global plans

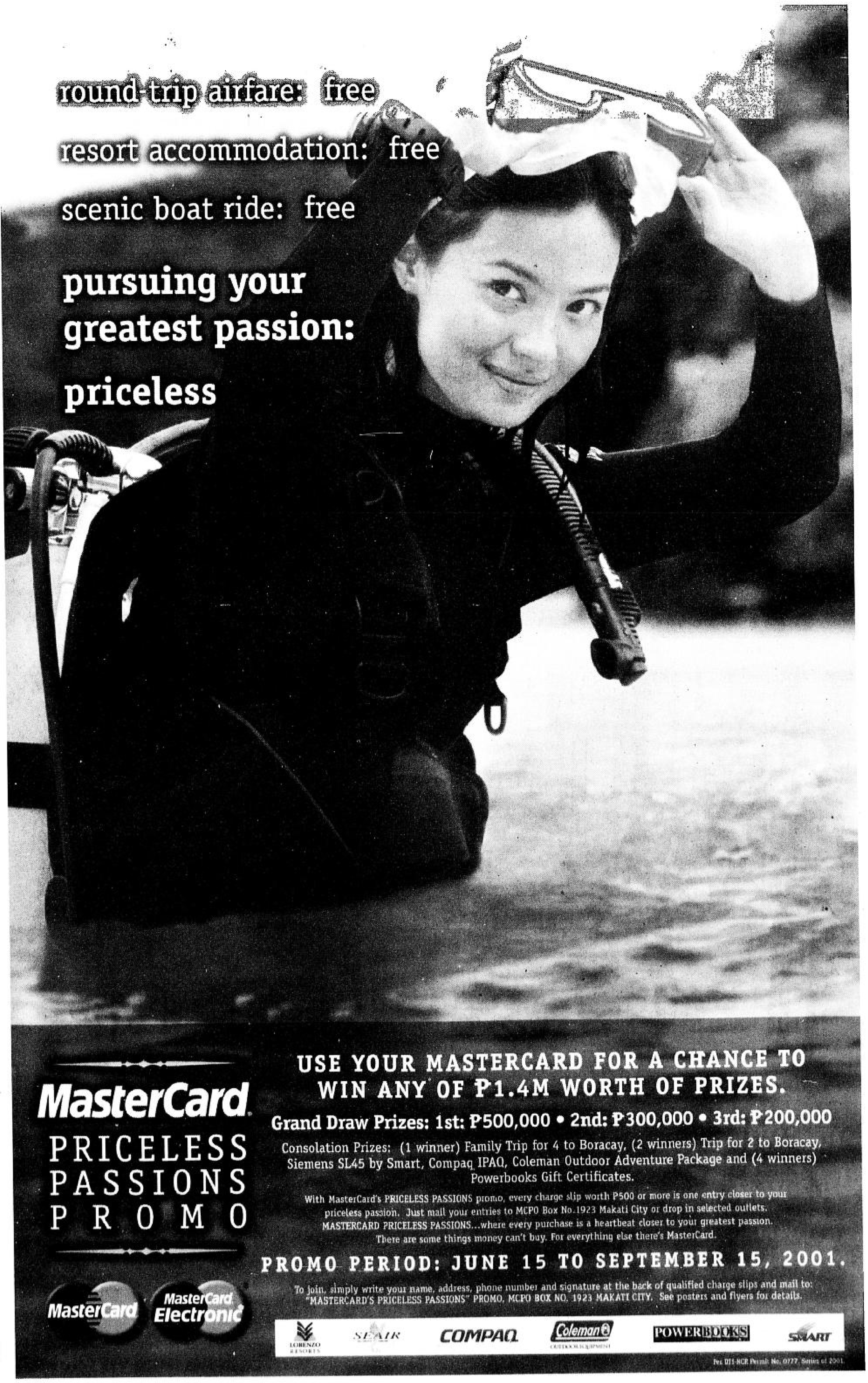
Manel's has plans to become a world-class retailer and a signature global brand. The first step is to export high-quality products, which mean stricter standards in manufacturing. It wants to standardize the local shoe industry by investing in plastic shoe lasts (the mold for the shoe) to replace wooden lasts which tend to morph due to the elements, making sizing inaccurate. Manel's also wants to work more closely with their tanners in order to get the right quality of leather.

Manel's is making a great effort to bring fine shoes and leather items, which are affordable to their customers. The store will soon have its anniversary sale. Initially, the anniversary sale was only for a day, but due to huge demand, it has now been extended to five days, the first day for VIP cardholders only. The sale is on Aug. 16-19.

Manel's bestsellers include its Napa leather collection and its sandals with cushioned soles. It has branches at Glorietta 1, Robinsons Galleria and several SM outlets.

MANEL'S boots

KIDDIE Collection



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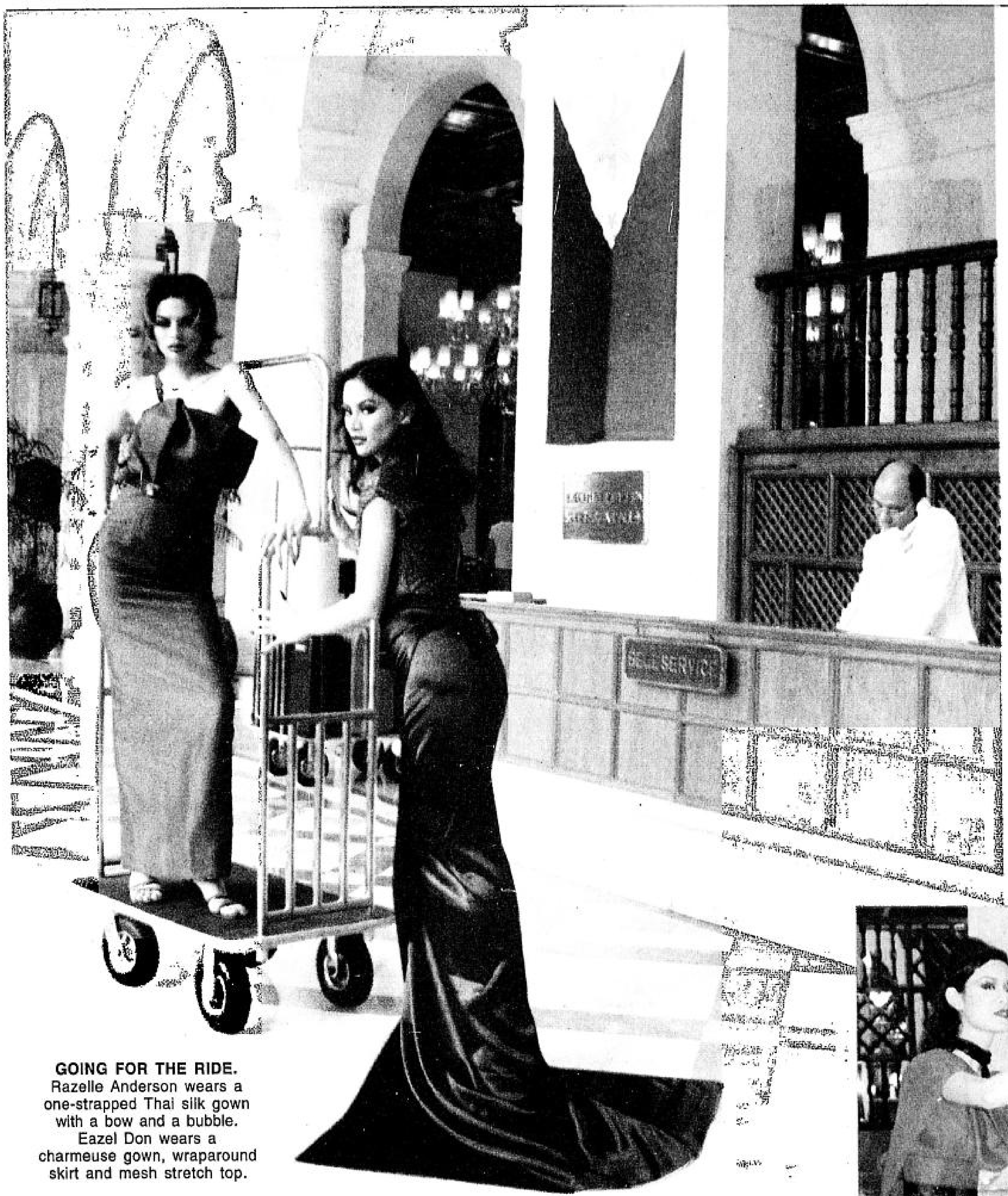
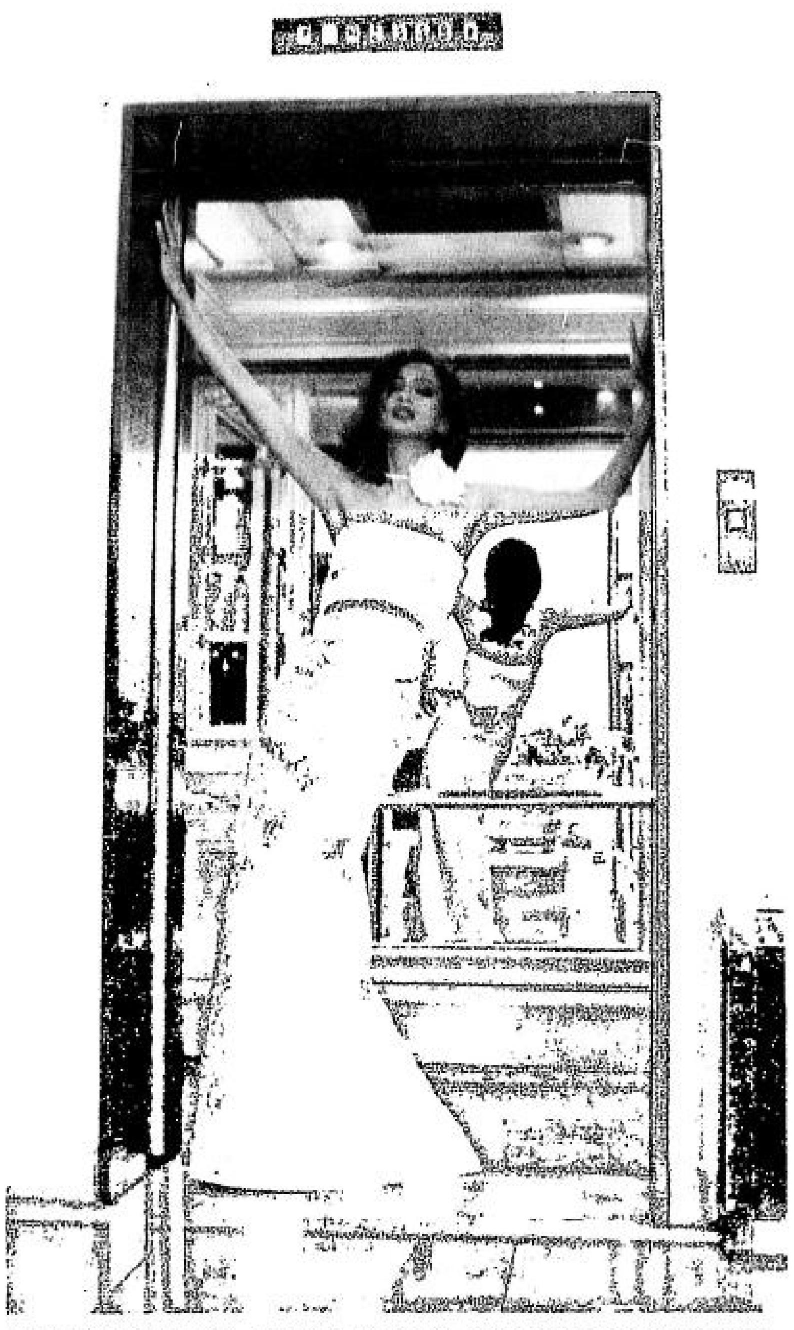


GOING FOR THE RIDE. Razelle Anderson wears a one-strapped Thai silk gown with a bow and a bubble. Eazel Don wears a charmeuse gown, wraparound skirt and mesh stretch top.

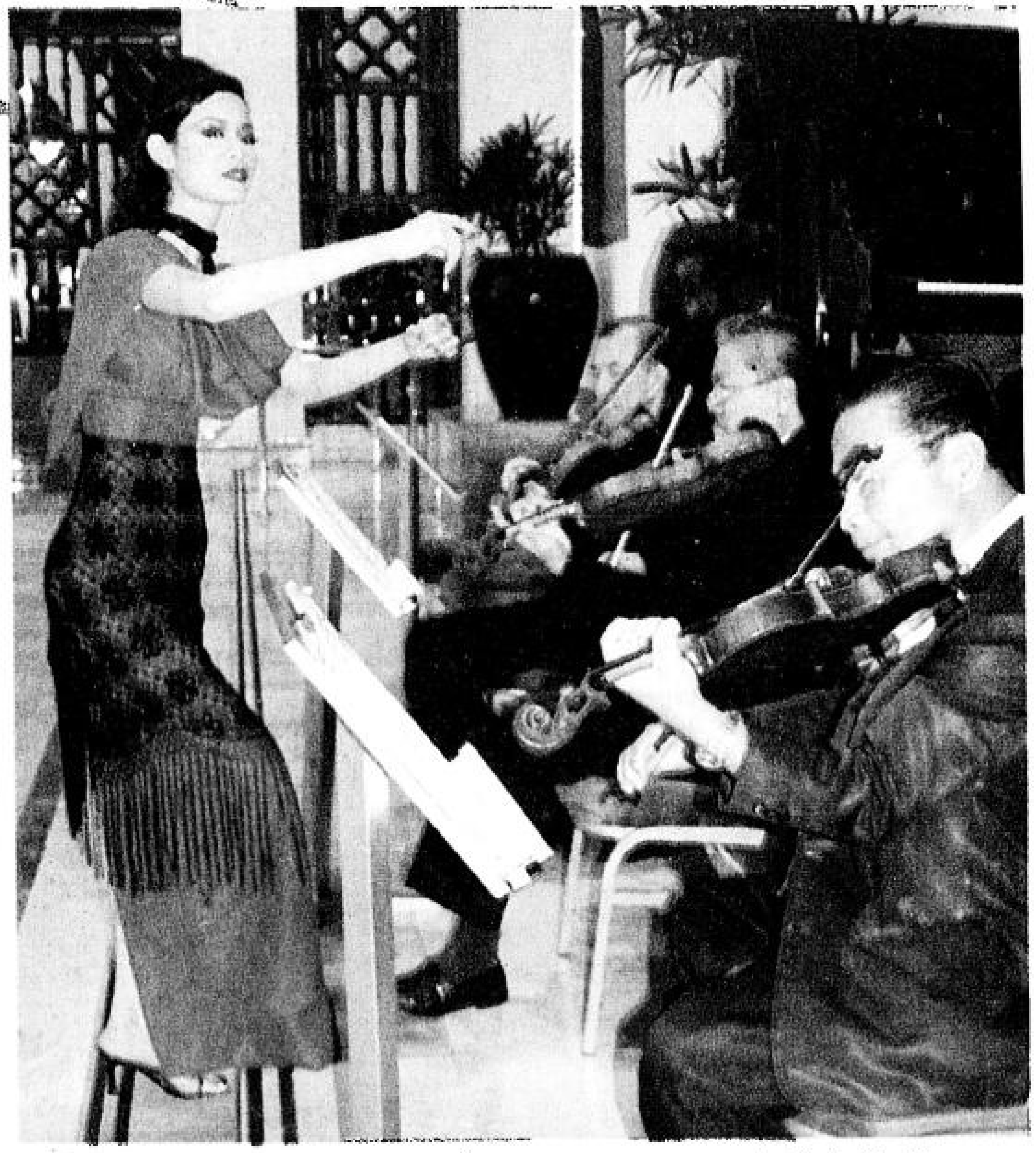


HEART-STOPPING. Maricris Perez in a brocade corset top and A-line skirt with a cabbage rose caught in a rhinestone necklace

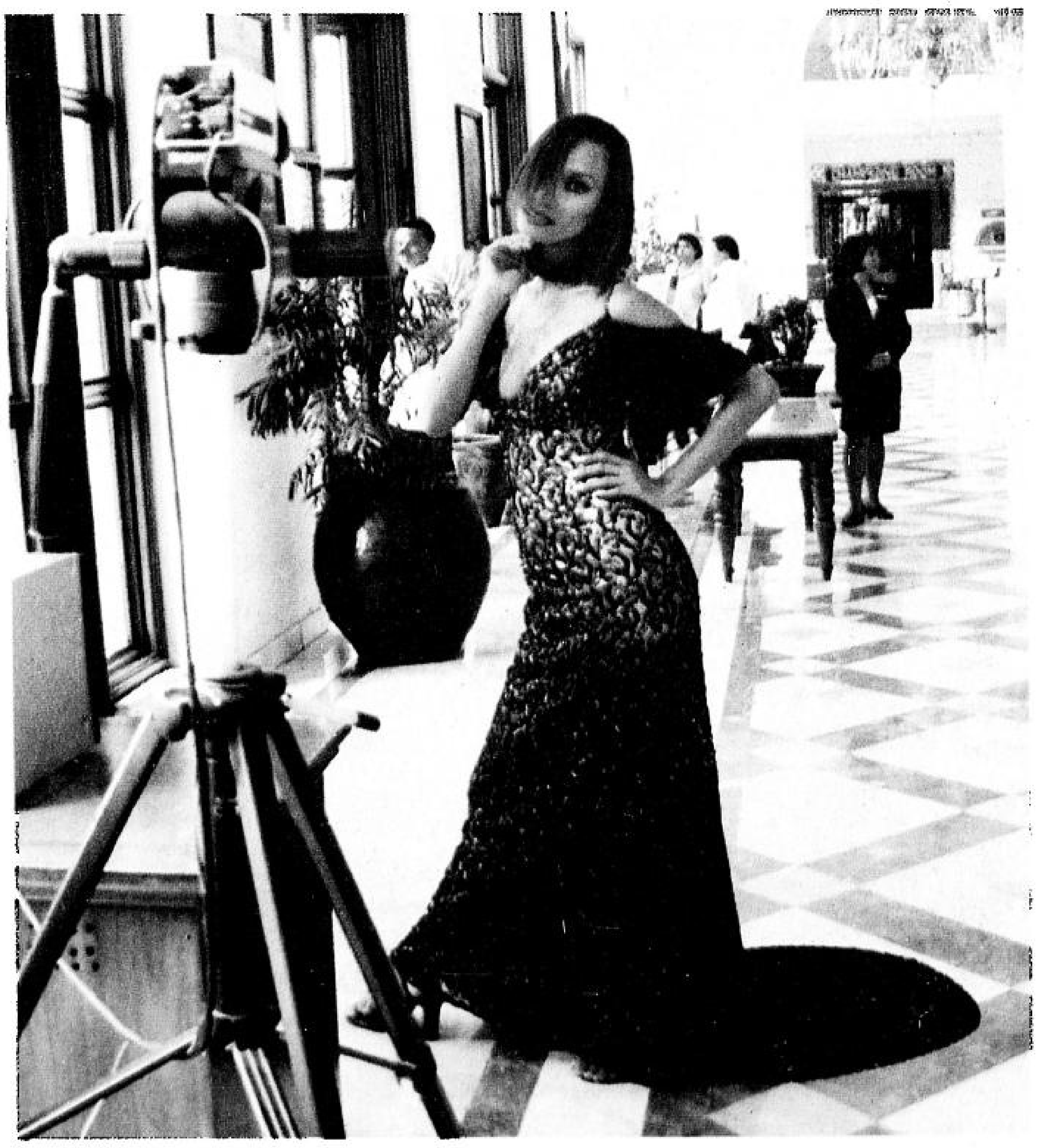
Burst of Baddeo

PHOTOS BY CHITO VECINA
PICTORIAL DIRECTION BY ALBERT AVELLANA

DESIGNER Eddie Baddeo is synonymous with shimmer. When it comes to fashion shows and pictorials, he does everything on a grandiose scale. For his 10th anniversary as a designer, he commissioned 10 prominent photographers to capture his clothes in print. Now on his 15th year, he got Manila's top models to emote his very saleable glam look at the Manila Hotel.

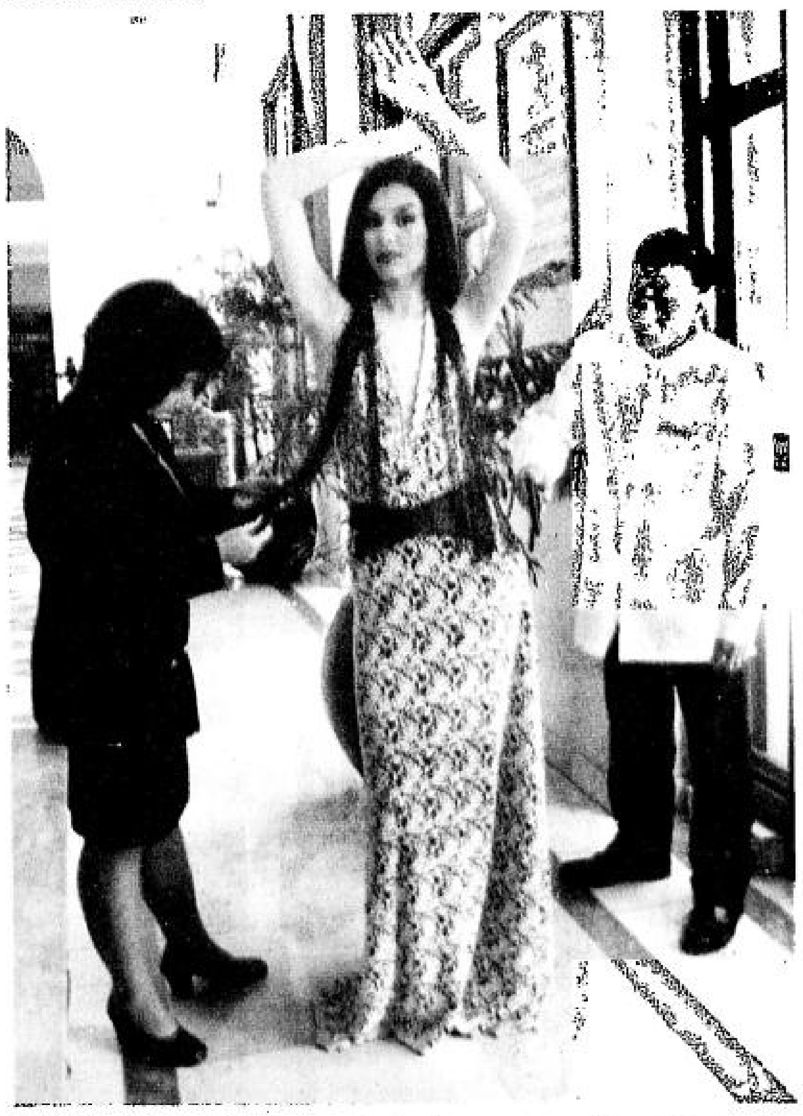


PLAYING SWEET MUSIC. Joan Bitagcol wears an empire gown in Thai silk with a draped collar and a crocheted overskirt.



SMILE, YOU'RE ON CANDID CAMERA. Wilma Doesnt is clad in a midnight stretch lace gown with tiered ruffled sleeves and satin floral choker.

Now on his 15th year as fashion designer, Eddie Baddeo doesn't let up when it comes to outbursts of glam, glam and glam



SIREN. Michelle Shulte in a stretch lace gown with caviar beads and cascading pearl beads

Pinoy writer skewers Manhattan with delicious chi

Fixer Chao
By Han Ong
Farrar, Straus & Giroux
New York, 2001
377 pages

By Cherish Garcia-Hernandez

REVIEW

FENG shui is the ancient Chinese art of arranging one's home or workplace to enhance health, wealth and happiness. Translated, feng shui literally means "wind and water." It is an art that is not new to Filipinos. Many faithfully adhere to it when decorating their homes. The basic principle of feng shui is to live in harmony with one's environment so that the energy (*chi*) surrounding you works for you rather than against you. Many swear by it, and geomancers, like the late Paul Lau, are sought after by society matrons in the same manner they would a couturier.

"Fixer Chao" is the debut novel of Han Ong, a Filipino playwright who has received critical acclaim for his Off Broadway plays. In "Fixer Chao," Ong introduces William Narciso Paulhina, a two bit Filipino hustler who migrated to America with his now estranged family. When William meets Shem C., a peculiar Jewish writer, in a seedy Times Square bar called the Savoy, a feng shui scam is born.

Shem enlists William to take on the role of Master Chao, a supposed feng shui expert from Hong Kong. With a little help from Conde Nast "House and Gadren," and a few feng shui pamphlets, the great Master Chao is born. In a short span of time, William becomes the "must-have" advisor of Manhattan's upper crust, especially after validation from a trendy magazine that counted Master Chao in a "best-of" list under "The Best of Good Living."

Like all tales, the denouement begins when the scam spirals out of control and the delineation between William Paulhina and Master Chao is slowly obliterated. Through all this there is a subplot of revenge behind Shem C.'s motives plus the threat of a running, scathing commentary on how ridiculous the rich and privileged can be.

Dizzying

Ong's style is dizzying, sometimes veering away from the plot at hand. However, his insightful observations are a pleasure to read, and his ability to pick up details that show quintessential Manhattan in the late '90s brings to mind books like Tom Wolf's "Bonfire of the Vanities" that defined New York in the '80s.

There are many comic moments in "Fixer Chao," mostly focusing on the gullibility of Manhattan's elite. (After all, who would pay $2,000 just to have someone tell them where to put a mirror?) When William meets a woman he dislikes, he fixes her house in such a way that it generates bad fung shui, and a series of unfortunate events do coincidentally fall upon her. But "Fixer Chao" is far from light. Most of the humor is laced with anger and bitterness, and the acerbic characters that fill the pages are actually sorry creatures that are far from happy with their lives.

Filipino thinking

The book also says something about how jaded society has become in the millennium—so much so that we blindly jump into things, always following someone else's lead. If we take a step back, we will see this is not a trait exclusive to Manhattan society only.

A novel by a Filipino satirizes feng shui and New York society's greedy gullibility

For the Filipino reader, Ong's writing hits home because the protagonist is not just a Filipino by virtue of his race—he is a Filipino in the way that he thinks. Many times he lashes out at his Catholic upbringing for its alleged hypocrisy. We cannot deny that the concept of Catholicism has not been properly explained to many of us and the ensuing backlash among the youth is because of this.

He also touches on the psyche of the Filipino immigrant and how some of them would rather live a life of struggle than face the shame of going home a failure. These countless references to the Philippines make provocative food for thought. On the lighter side, there are little details that only a Filipino would find humor in, like a pet goldfish named Divina Valencia.

But even beyond that, Han Ong's debut is brilliant. His characters are memorable and his dialogue depicts the insecure culture that the world has become, without missing a beat. At a time when commercial writers churn out formula books by the dozen, it is refreshing to find a talented writer with his own distinct voice. And this author, who is among the youngest recipients of the prestigious Mac Arthur Fellows, was educated in the Philippines at that.

E-mail the author at cherishgh@yahoo.com

Message to a lost love

LIVE AND LET LIVE

Tita Dulce

DEAR Tita Dulce,

Here is an open letter to my ex-girlfriend whom I have not seen for quite some time now. She has moved to Mindanao with no forwarding address. This is quite personal, but it means so much to me. I hope there's a space for this:

To my past love,

On my way home recently, I met a mutual friend of ours. After the initial pleasantries, the conversation drifted toward us. She said you were very bitter about our breakup and it brought back feelings that I have kept all these years.

It was a warm summer night when I told you, "I don't want you to hear this from other people. I am in love with someone else." With those words, I expressed the truth that we had been evading: that we were no longer in love with each other. I did not have another relationship. In fairness to the other girl, she did not know about you. I was in love with her, but she was not in love with me. However, I could no longer pretend there was affection between us. Nor could I continue to share a meal with you and make false expressions of appreciation for your cooking.

You had been bitter. But how do you think I have been feeling all these years? It was not all one-sided.

We treated our relationship as an anvil instead of china. It was strong, based on mutual trust and affection over a long period of time. However, we failed to let it grow. We presumed that mere length of time was enough to shield us from the tests we had to go through. We were complacent.

You thought I robbed you of your chance at happiness. We were happy once. There was a time when being together was enough and other things were mere distractions.

I, too, am bitter but not toward you. We had a beautiful relationship that was put to a test and failed. Outside forces test relationships. Together, we resisted those forces. We helped each other in times of personal weakness, we overcame the temptations that pulled us apart. Our common ideals bound us together. How I wish that that first day when we decided to do things for ourselves and not for each other never came. It could have changed our future. I am writing this not in contrition but to tell you it is again a warm summer night.

CRISOSTOMO N. MIRANDA
11 Matatag St., QC

Your letter has been written in a dignified tone with a gentle message. The way I see it, the reason you put your name and address is because you hope to hear from her. Best wishes.

E-mail the authro at titadulce@netscape.net or send letters to P.O. Box 2353, Makati CPO 1263 Makati City, or PDI, Chino Roces Avenue corner Yague and Mascardo Streets, Makati City.

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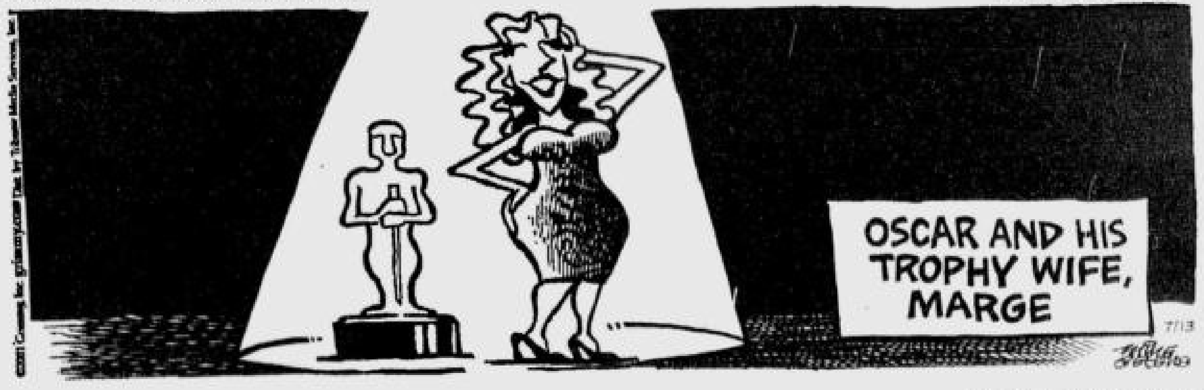
Asian Spirit
THE PEOPLE'S AIRLINE

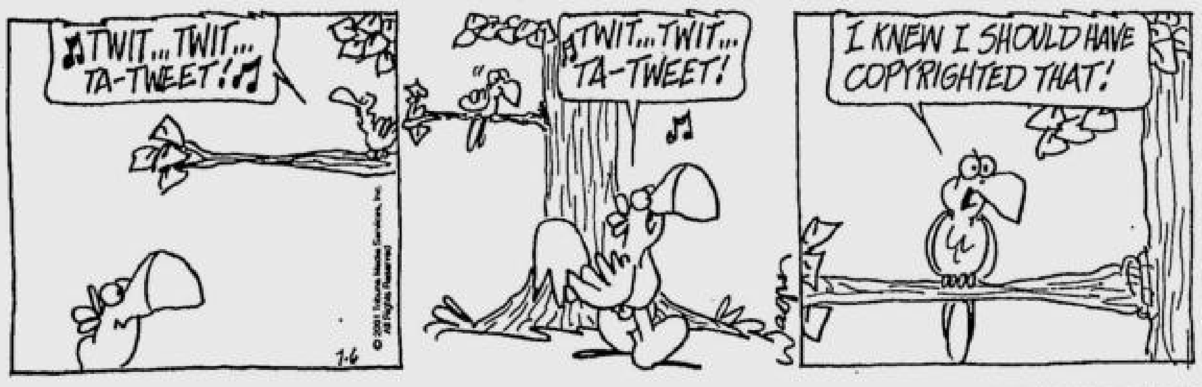
MOTHER GOOSE & GRIMM

BY MIKE PETERS


OSCAR AND HIS TROPHY WIFE, MARGE
7/13

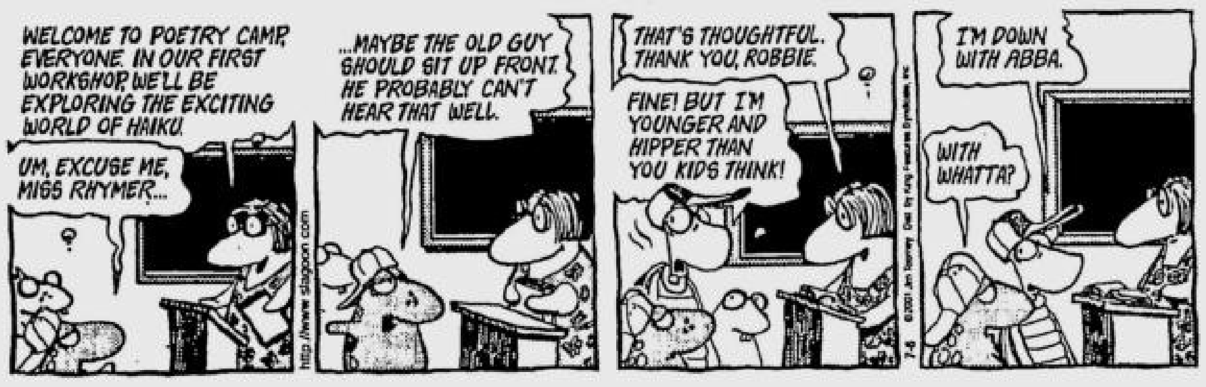
ANIMAL CRACKER

BY FRED WAGNER


TWIT...TWIT... TA-TWEET!
TWIT...TWIT... TA-TWEET!
I KNEW I SHOULD HAVE COPYRIGHTED THAT!
7-6

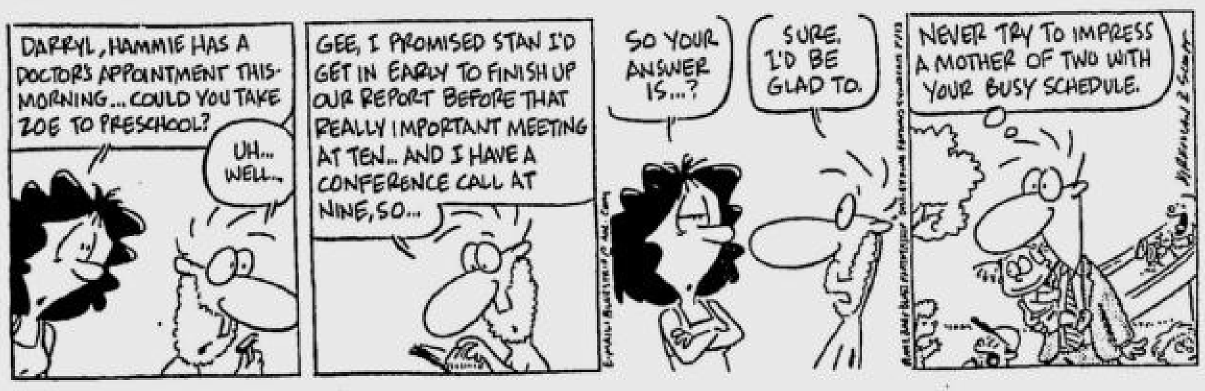
SHERMAN'S LAGOON

BY JIM TOOMEY


WELCOME TO POETRY CAMP, EVERYONE. IN OUR FIRST WORKSHOP, WE'LL BE EXPLORING THE EXCITING WORLD OF HAIKU.
UM, EXCUSE ME, MISS RHYMER...
...MAYBE THE OLD GUY SHOULD SIT UP FRONT. HE PROBABLY CAN'T HEAR THAT WELL.
THAT'S THOUGHTFUL. THANK YOU, ROBBIE.
FINE! BUT I'M YOUNGER AND HIPPER THAN YOU KIDS THINK!
I'M DOWN WITH ABBA.
WITH WHATTA?
http://www.slagoon.com

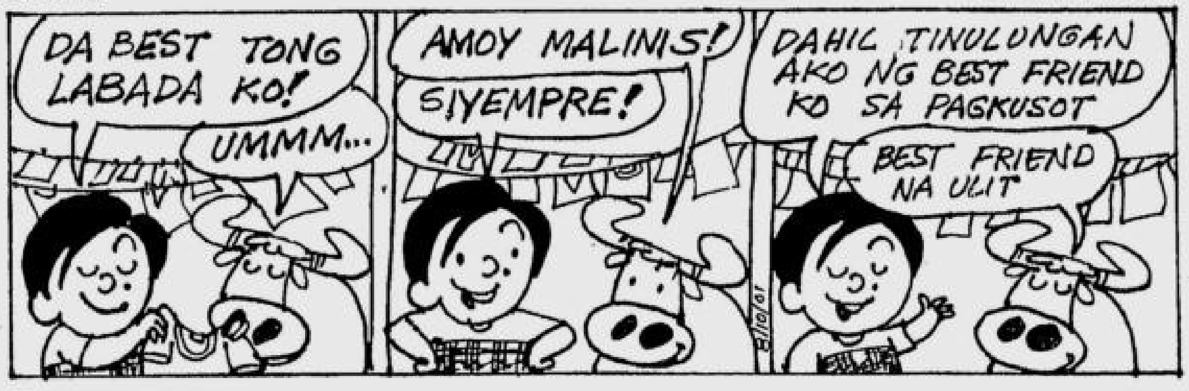
BABY BLUES

BY JERRY SCOTT


DARRYL, HAMMIE HAS A DOCTOR'S APPOINTMENT THIS MORNING... COULD YOU TAKE ZOE TO PRESCHOOL?
UH... WELL...
GEE, I PROMISED STAN I'D GET IN EARLY TO FINISH UP OUR REPORT BEFORE THAT REALLY IMPORTANT MEETING AT TEN... AND I HAVE A CONFERENCE CALL AT NINE, SO...
SO YOUR ANSWER IS...?
SURE. I'D BE GLAD TO.
NEVER TRY TO IMPRESS A MOTHER OF TWO WITH YOUR BUSY SCHEDULE.

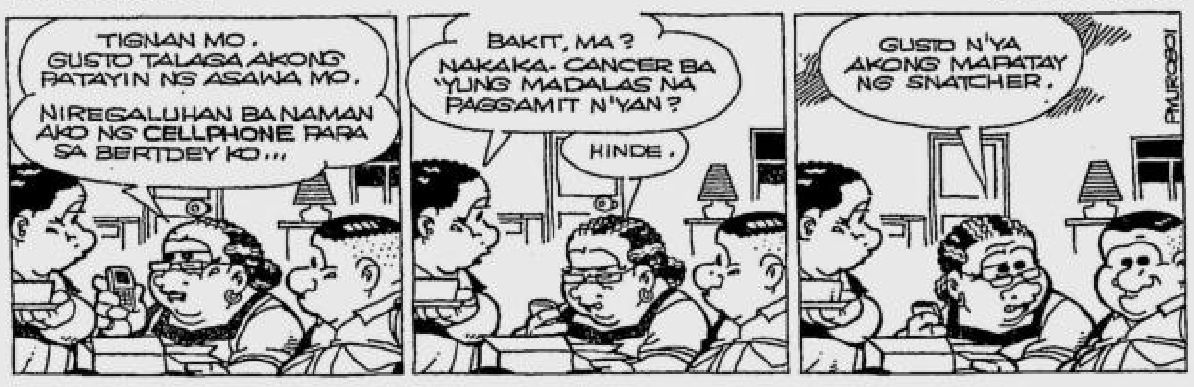
A. LIPIN

BY JESS ABRERA


DA BEST TONG LABADA KO!
UMMM...
AMOY MALINIS!
SIYEMPRE!
DAHIL TINULUNGAN AKO NG BEST FRIEND KO SA PAGKUSOT
BEST FRIEND NA ULIT

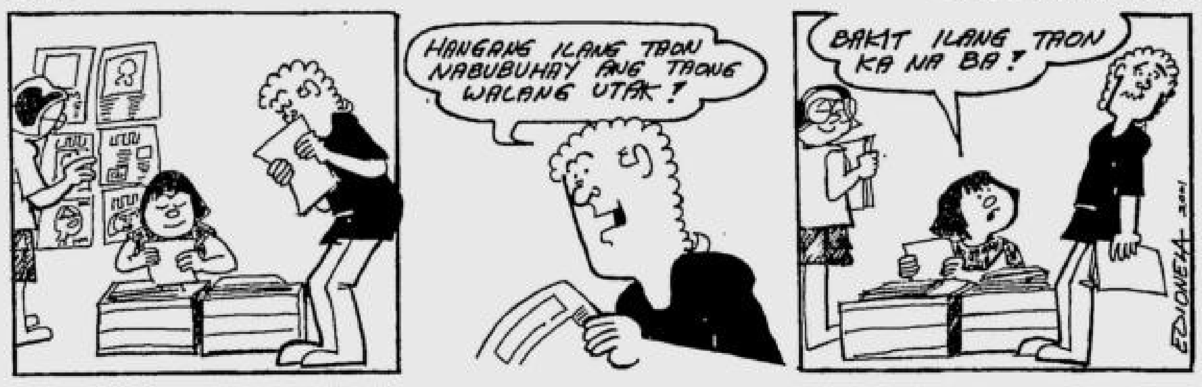
PUGAD BABOY

BY P.M. JUNIOR


TIGNAN MO. GUSTO TALAGA AKONG PATAYIN NG ASAWA MO.
NIREGALUHAN BA NAMAN AKO NG CELLPHONE PARA SA BERTDEY KO...
BAKIT, MA? NAKAKA-CANCER BA 'YUNG MADALAS NA PAGGAMIT N'YAN?
HINDE.
GUSTO N'YA AKONG MAPATAY NG SNATCHER.
PMJR

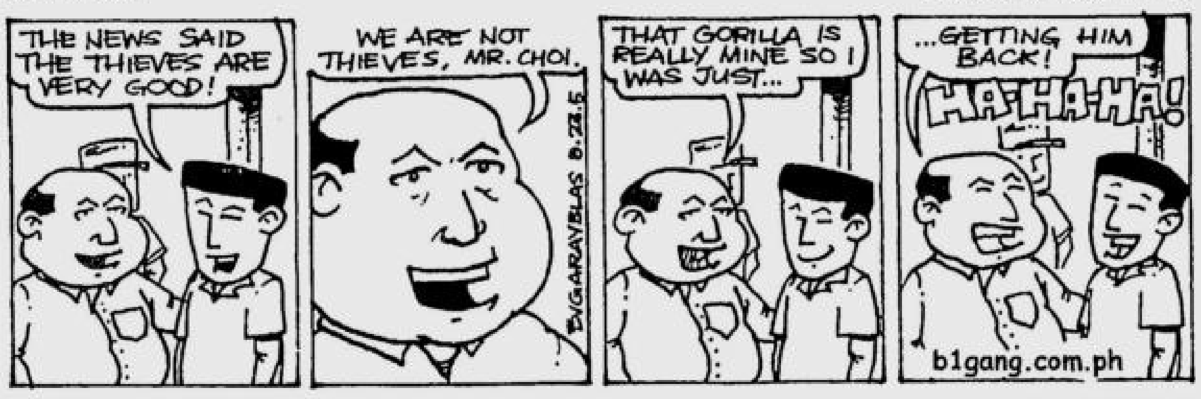
SIMO

BY EDGAR DIONELA


HANGANG ILANG TAON NABUBUHAY ANG TAONG WALANG UTAK!
BAKIT ILANG TAON KA NA BA?
EDIONELA 2001

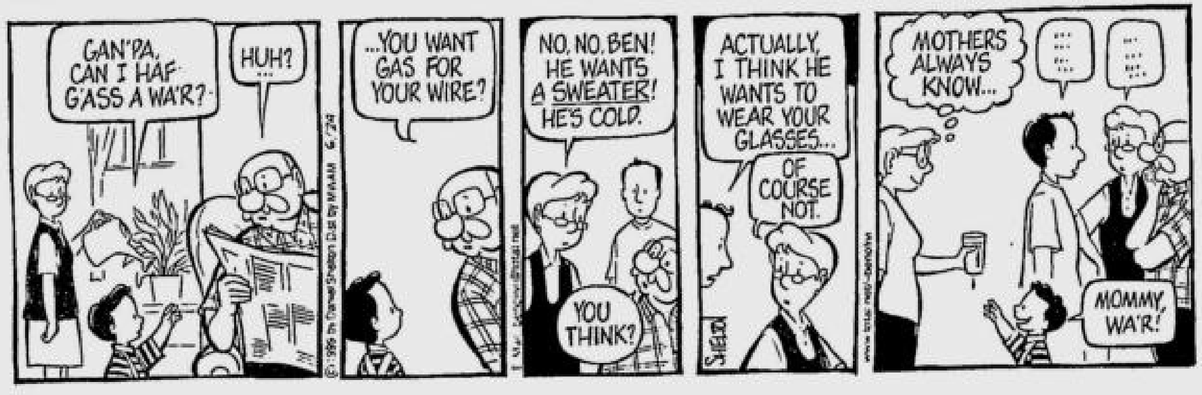
B1 GANG

BY ATS11/ JEA/ FEVG


THE NEWS SAID THE THIEVES ARE VERY GOOD!
WE ARE NOT THIEVES, MR. CHOI.
THAT GORILLA IS REALLY MINE SO I WAS JUST...
...GETTING HIM BACK!
HA-HA-HA!
BUGARAYBLAS 8.23.5
b1gang.com.ph

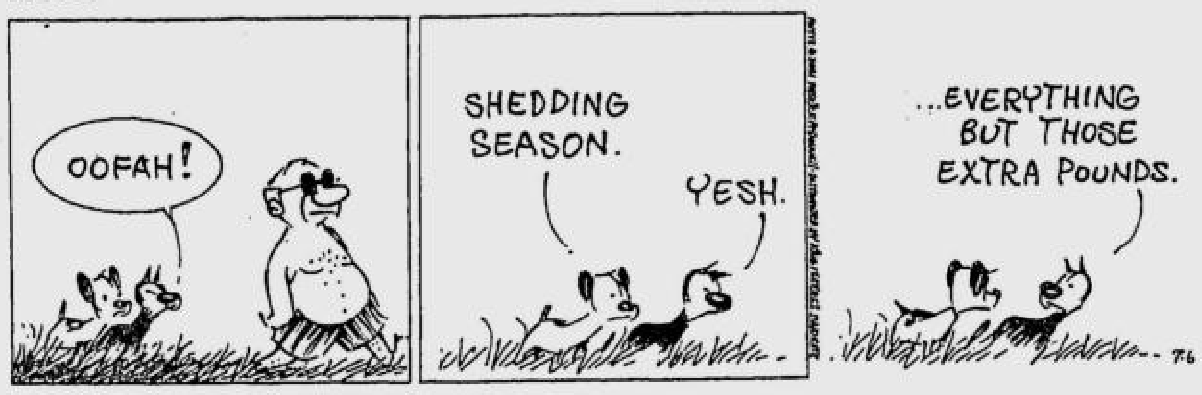
BEN

BY DANIEL SHELTON


GAN'PA, CAN I HAF G'ASS A WA'R?
HUH?
...YOU WANT GAS FOR YOUR WIRE?
NO, NO, BEN! HE WANTS A SWEATER! HE'S COLD.
YOU THINK?
ACTUALLY, I THINK HE WANTS TO WEAR YOUR GLASSES...
OF COURSE NOT.
MOTHERS ALWAYS KNOW...
MOMMY, WA'R!

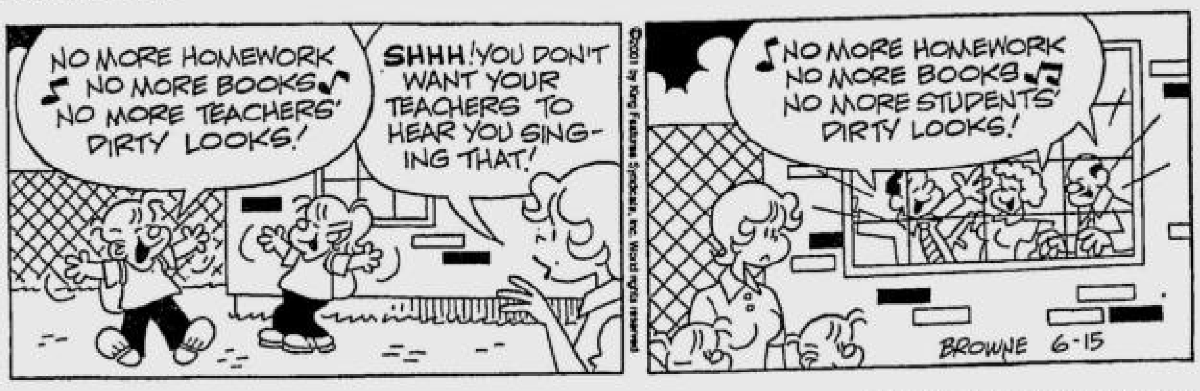
MUTTS

BY PATRICK McDONNELL


OOFAH!
SHEDDING SEASON.
YESH.
...EVERYTHING BUT THOSE EXTRA POUNDS.
7-6

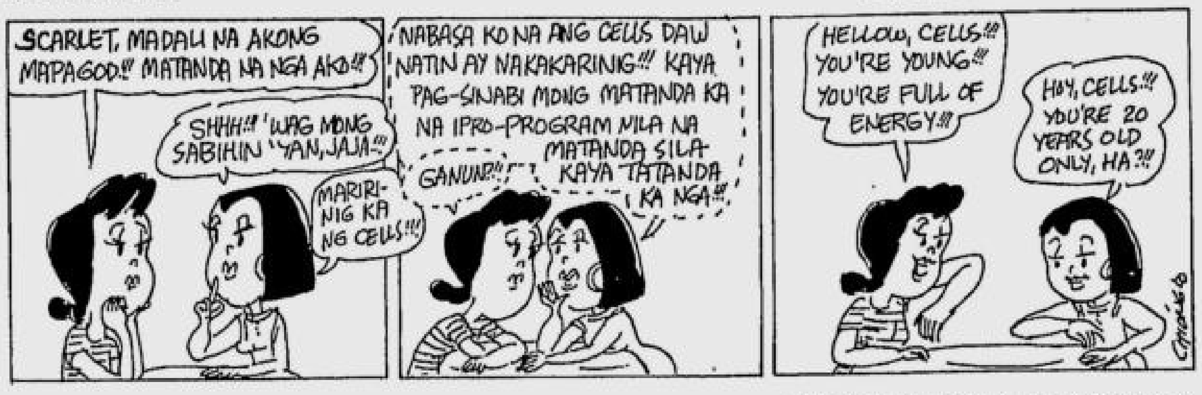
HI AND LOIS

BY BRIAN & GREG WALKER


NO MORE HOMEWORK NO MORE BOOKS NO MORE TEACHERS' DIRTY LOOKS!
SHHH! YOU DON'T WANT YOUR TEACHERS TO HEAR YOU SINGING THAT!
NO MORE HOMEWORK NO MORE BOOKS NO MORE STUDENTS' DIRTY LOOKS!
BROWNE 6-15

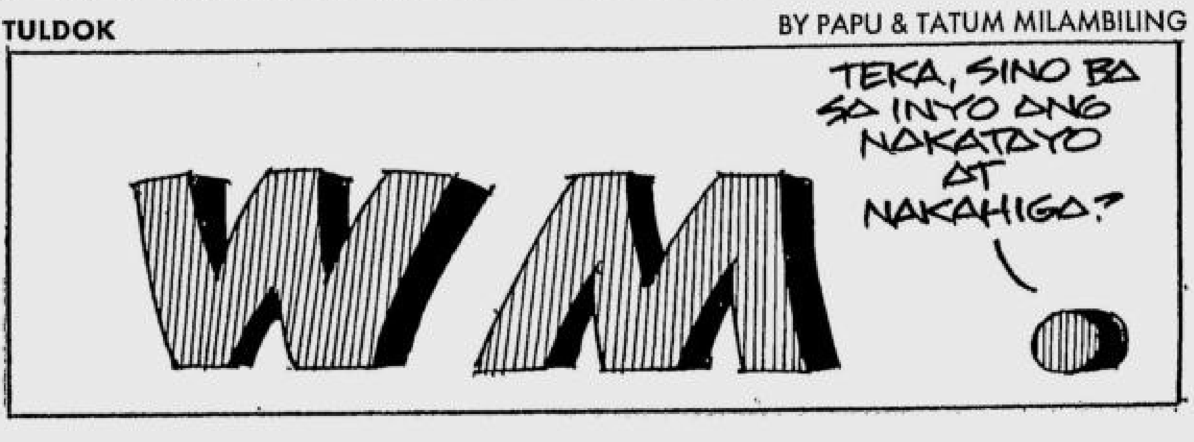
LOVEKNOTS

BY ELIZABETH CHIONGLO


SCARLET, MADALI NA AKONG MAPAGOD!! MATANDA NA NGA AKO!!
SHHH!! 'WAG MONG SABIHIN 'YAN, JAJA!!
MARIRINIG KA NG CELLS!!!
NABASA KO NA ANG CELLS DAW NATIN AY NAKAKARINIG!!! KAYA PAG-SINABI MONG MATANDA KA NA IPRO-PROGRAM NILA NA MATANDA SILA KAYA TATANDA KA NGA!!
GANUN?!!
HELLOW, CELLS!!! YOU'RE YOUNG!!! YOU'RE FULL OF ENERGY!!!
HOY, CELLS!!! YOU'RE 20 YEARS OLD ONLY, HA?!!

TULDOK

BY PAPU & TATUM MILAMBILING


TEKA, SINO BA SA INYO ANG NAKATAYO AT NAKAHIGA?
W M

HOROSCOPE

BY EUGENIA LAST

CELEBRITIES BORN ON THIS DAY: Antonio Banderas, Jimmy Dean, Rosanna Arquette, Patti Austin, Eddie Fisher

Happy Birthday: Your memory is an asset this year. Take control of your life and don't hesitate to put others in their place if necessary. Although you are in a winning cycle, push hard or you may fall short of your goals. Plan well. You have much to offer and plenty to gain. Your numbers: 19, 22, 26, 31, 38, 42

ARIES (March 21-April 19): You will be looking for creative ways to make some extra money. Don't put cash behind someone else. Invest in yourself for success.

TAURUS (April 20-May 20): You will have a problem sorting out your true feelings about your relationship. You may be torn between two possibilities, which has left you in a confused and uncertain state.

GEMINI (May 21-June 20): Don't allow fellow workers to take advantage of your fine talents. If they want help, that's great, but if they try to take credit for your work, set them straight.

CANCER (June 21-July 22): You need to mingle with people who can spark enthusiasm and confidence in you. Look into joining groups that can give you hands-on advice about business.

LEO (July 23-Aug. 22): You will have difficulties covering both work and home. Do what you can, but don't jeopardize your health trying to please everyone.

VIRGO (Aug. 23-Sept. 22): Take off and enjoy the weekend. You need to be active and enjoy spending time with friends. Do a little shopping. You're likely to find a real bargain.

LIBRA (Sept. 23-Oct. 22): Get busy on those home-improvement projects you've been procrastinating about. Stay out of trouble by selecting projects that will benefit the whole family.

SCORPIO (Oct. 23-Nov. 21): A loved one will be a bit jumpy. Maybe you ought to find a means to mellow out. A quiet evening where you can sit back, kick off your shoes and relax would probably do the relationship a world of good.

SAGITTARIUS (Nov. 22-Dec. 21): Put in some extra hours and finish those painstaking jobs before moving on to a weekend of fun and games. Be careful not to make promises that you can't deliver.

CAPRICORN (Dec. 22-Jan. 19): You should be looking at ways to spoil yourself. Return to the comforts of cottage or home and spend time with friends and family.

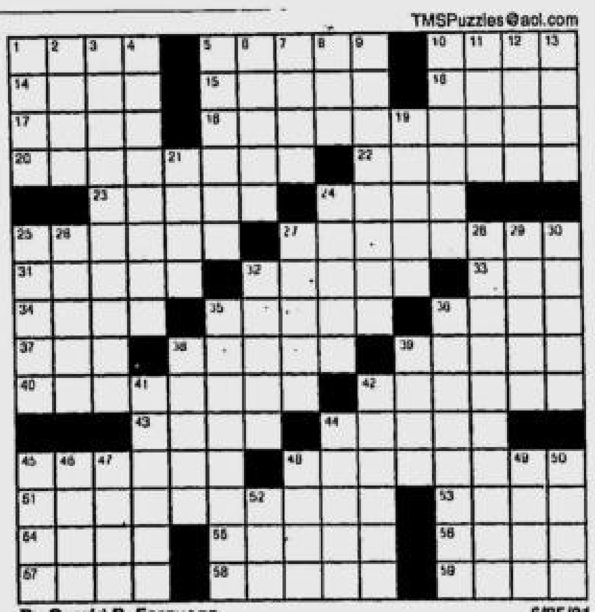
AQUARIUS (Jan. 20-Feb. 18): Not everyone will be pleased with your plans. Take time to find out if anyone has a better suggestion before making arrangements for the whole family.

PISCES (Feb. 19-March 20): You will enjoy getting together with friends. Travel and entertaining conversation will be informative and uplifting. You need a break from your daily routine.

Birthday Baby: You've got the right creative ideas to put your plans in motion. You are a mover and a shaker and will never be happy to sit back as a spectator.

DAILY CROSSWORD

TMSPuzzles@aol.com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57 58 59

By Gerald R. Ferguson
Portland, OR

6/25/01

ACROSS
1 Glaswegian guys
5 Temporary shelters
10 Not for
14 Plenty
15 Neighbor of Washington
16 Stand by
17 Walt Kelly's comic strip
18 Parking officers
20 Italian ewe's-milk cheese
22 Sharpshooter Annie
23 Dershowitz and Greenspan
24 Runny French cheese
25 Locating
27 Install again
31 Shaped like a rainbow
32 Put in loose stitches
33 Theater-sign letters
34 Collegiate cheers
35 Spiteful
36 Fed
37 Broke bread
38 Painful places
39 Urbane
40 Common food fish
42 Steeples' toppers
43 Pot sweetener
44 Oodles
45 Worshiper
48 Classy headwear
51 Wildlife officer
53 Author of "Bed Riddance"
54 Raw minerals
55 Glinted
56 Asp victim, briefly
57 Fella
58 Willful injuries
59 Jacob's brother

DOWN
1 Northern Scandinavian
2 African lily
3 Canine officer
4 Squealers
5 Art of pace
6 Sir Anthony and Barbara
7 Eur. defense assn.
8 Word ignored when alphabetizing
9 College organization
10 Roused
11 Claw
12 Powerful trend
13 __-bitsy
19 Battleship to remember
21 Author of "The Fountainhead"
24 Outdoes
25 Actress Bernhardt
26 Really miffed
27 Deserves
28 Federal officers
29 Hunger for
30 Shadings
32 Erie Canal transport
35 Light-dark difference
36 Counseling
38 Tendon
39 Support for rigging
41 Most uncommon
42 Act parts
44 Used credit cards
45 All aflutter
46 Challenge
47 Augury
48 Aroma
49 Cruising
50 Gee
52 Pi follower

PREVIOUS PUZZLE ANSWER

M	A	H	A	R	A	J	A	H		A	R	O	M	A
E	R	A	D	I	C	A	T	E		T	O	N	I	S
S	C	R	I	V	E	N	E	R		O	W	E	N	S
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A	L	P		E	T	U	I		T	R	U	S	T	S
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S	E	D	A	N		A	W	A	R	E	N	E	S	S

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6/25/01

THE ATENEO de Manila College Glee Club will perform at 7 tonight at the Church of the Risen Lord in UP Diliman, and tomorrow, 7 p.m., at the Philamlife Auditorium. Call the Ateneo Alumni Office at 426-6081, 486-6001 local 4086.

Conference on Thomasites' legacy to RP's education set

GOINGS-ON

THE AMERICAN Studies Association of the Philippines will hold an international conference on the theme "Book to the Future: Perspectives on the Thomasites' Legacy to Philippine Education," Aug. 24-25, at the Escaler Hall, Ateneo de Manila University. Philippine and international scholars will present papers at the conference, which commemorates the centennial of the arrival of the early American teachers who established the public school system in the Philippines. Call 926-3496 or 920-5301 local 7236.

MEETING. The San Francisco High School in Quezon City will be holding a regular membership meeting tomorrow, Aug. 11, 5 p.m., at F. Benitez Hall, UP Diliman, QC. Call 453-2163, 371-3773, 924-3244, 926-6271 or 920-6721.

LIBRARIANS FORUM. The Quezon City Librarians Association Inc. holds a joint fellowship-forum on "Handling Difficult People" 8 a.m.-3 p.m. today at the Quezon City Public Library Conference Room, Quezon City Hall, QC. Call 927-9834, 921-7316, 415-2272 local 4564.

SEMINAR. The ProActive Center for Training will hold a seminar-workshop on restaurant management on Aug. 13-22, 1-5 p.m. at Encore! Encore!, 2/L SM Megamall A. Call 823-4947.

MUSICAL. A rock musical produced by Atlantis Production, dubbed "Hedwig and the Angry Inch," opens tonight at the PCI Bank Building Tower One in Makati. It will run until Sept.1. Call 892-7078.

PHOTO WORKSHOP. Plus|minus Film Camp will hold a basic and advance photo workshop starting Aug. 18. The workshop will run until Sept. 18. Registration is ongoing. Call 834-1163 or visit 302 CKSY Diamond Building, 152 A. Arnaiz Avenue, Pasay City.

LECTURE SERIES. The Japan Foundation Manila Office will engage in a collaborative project with the Asian Center and the Japanology Council of the Philippines. Dubbed "Seminar Caravan on Japan," the first of a series of public lectures on Japan Studies, will be held on Sept. 21-22 at the Romulo Hall of the Asian Center, UP Diliman, QC. Call 920-35-49, 926-18-21, 811-6153/55 to -58.

EUCHARISTIC CELEBRATION. Assumption College is inviting all its alumnae to attend the Eucharistic celebration in honor of Our Lady's Assumption on Aug. 15, 10 a.m. at the Assumption Chapel in San Lorenzo Village.

PHOTO EXHIBIT. A one-man photo exhibit of top photojournalist Edgardo S. Santiago is ongoing at The Alcove, Filipinas Heritage Library, Makati Avenue, Makati City. It runs until Aug. 18.

SALE. Harvard Jeans USA offers discount up to 70 percent on selected items at its Isetann branches in Carriedo, Cubao and Recto on Aug.11-20. Harvard Jeans USA are available at all SM Department Stores, Robinson Department Stores, Isetann, Ever Department Stores and all Gaisano Department Stores.

LEADERSHIP SEMINAR. The second series of "The 21 Irrefutable Laws of Leadership" is set tomorrow, Aug. 11, at the ISO Complex, Ateneo de Manila University, QC. Call 415-8713 or 372-9265.

PAINTING WORKSHOP. The UP College of Fine Arts will conduct beginners and advanced workshops on watercolor oil painting. The workshops include hands-on lessons on basic and advanced techniques in watercolor and oil painting. The 18-session workshop will be held on Wednesdays and Saturdays at the Enriquez Hall, College of Fine Arts, UP Diliman, QC. Call 920-5301 to -99 local 7074 or 434-8218/8221.

BAZAAR. The Annual International Bazaar will be held on Nov. 10 at the World Trade Center, Roxas Boulevard, Manila. It will feature the wares of a select group of local entrepreneurs and exporters. Call 831-2336/2201 local 263 or 261.

AUDITIONS. Today is the last day for auditions for the musicals "Alikabok" and "Sino Ka Ba Jose Rizal." Auditions will be held 1-6 p.m. at the Suburbia Bar and Restaurant, Adriatico Street, Malate. The two musicals will be presented January to March at the Music Museum on Mabini Street also in Malate.

WRITING CONTEST. The Philippine Board on Books for Young People (PBBY) is looking for original stories for children through its annual PBBY-Salanga Writer's Prize. All entries must be original and stories should be intended for children aged 6 to 12 years old. The plot and the sequence must be capable of sustaining an illustrated book of 28-32 pages; may be in Filipino or English; must be typewritten, double-spaced, on short bond paper. Maximum length is five pages. Send entries to the PBBY Secretariat, c/o Adarna House, 73-A Scout Limbaga St., Brgy. Laging Handa, QC. Deadline for submission is on Oct. 15. Call 372-3548 to -49.

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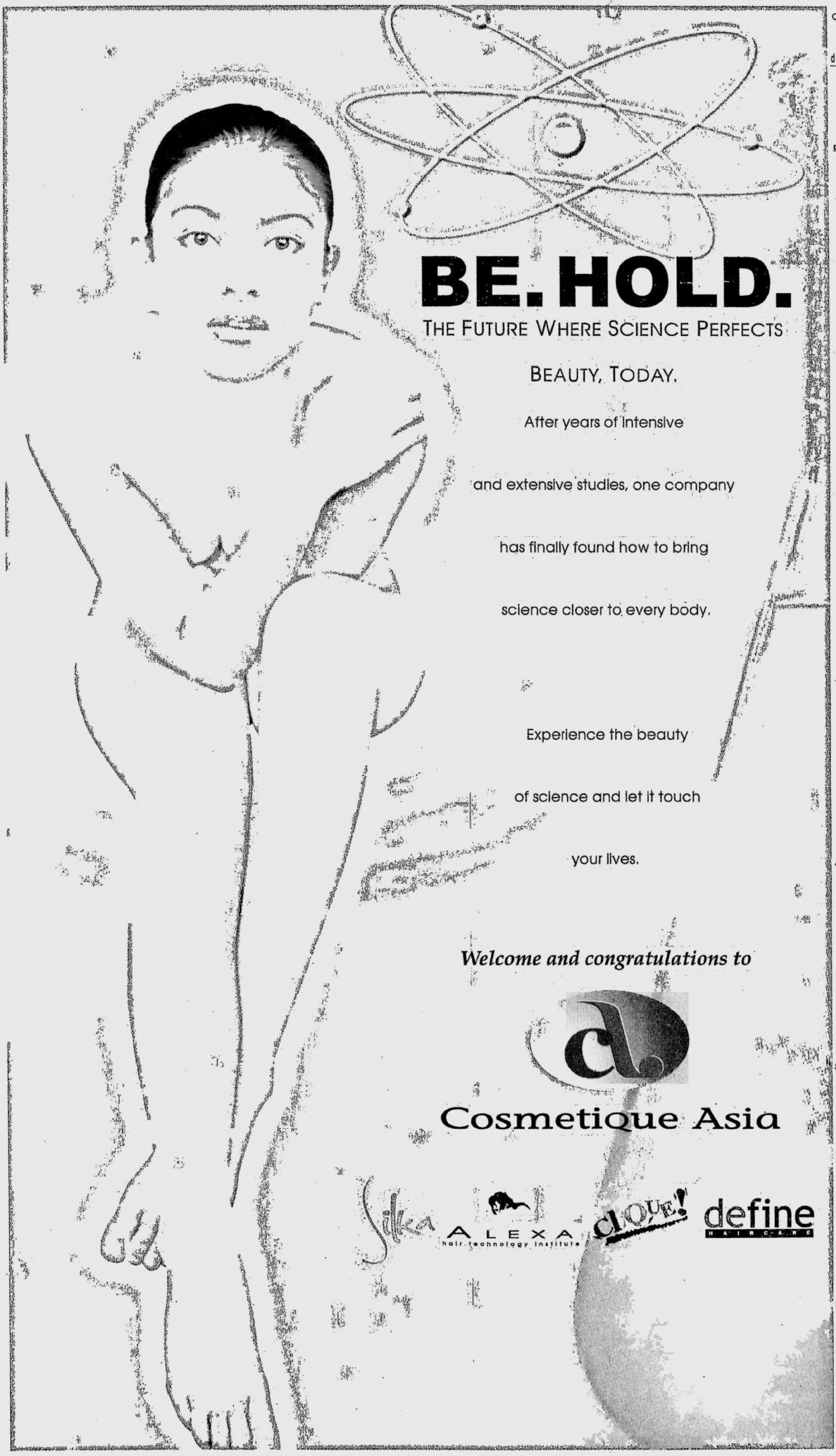

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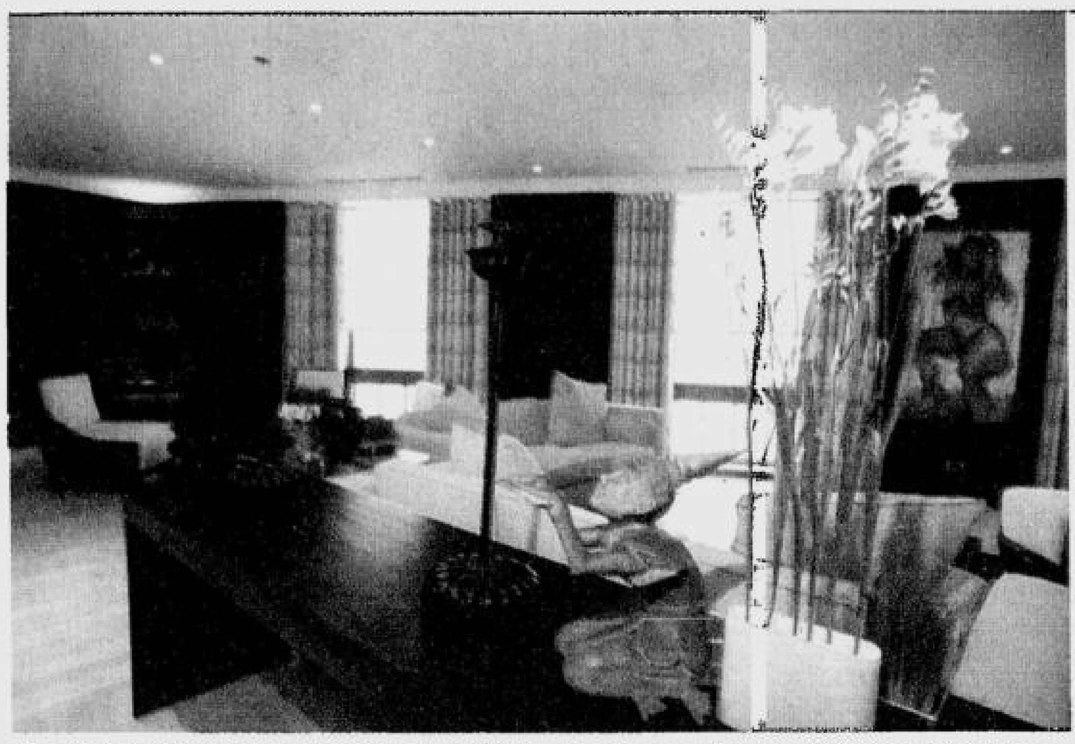

LADY WITH NO NAME. BenCab's untitled work acts as a focal point in the living room.

Making the art masters feel at home

By Alex Y. Vergara
Photos by Bobot Meru

THERE are countless ways to put artworks together and make them work for your home. Living spaces need not look like a gallery no matter how diverse your collections are. Through proper grouping and a few structural changes, your precious artworks are bound to blend with the rest of your furniture and accent pieces.

MAKING/p.D2

Cynthia Almario gives a tip or two on composing your interiors around the works of avatars of composition

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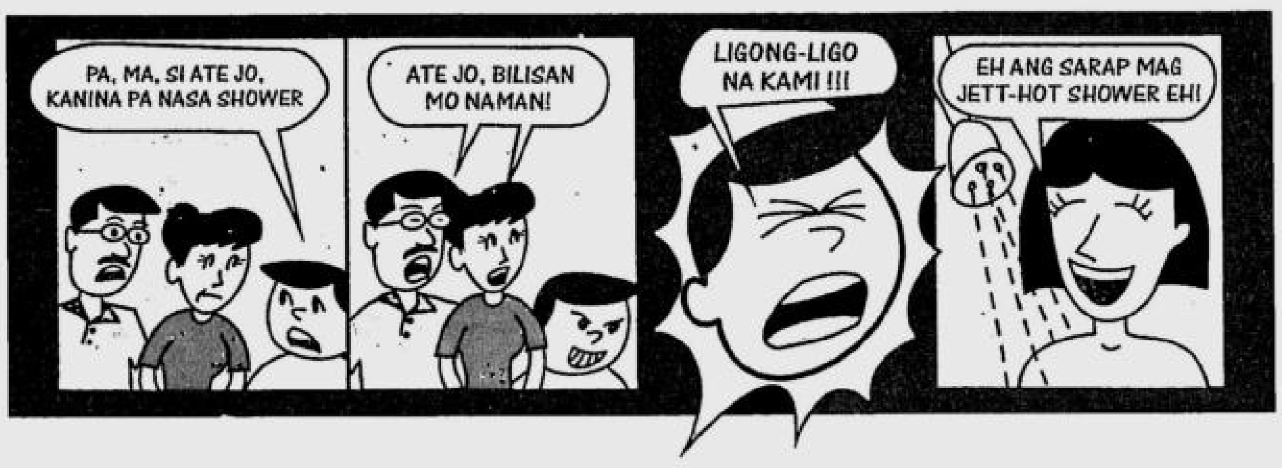

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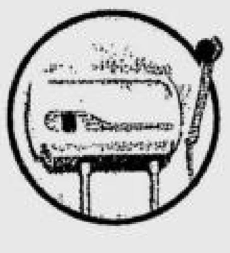

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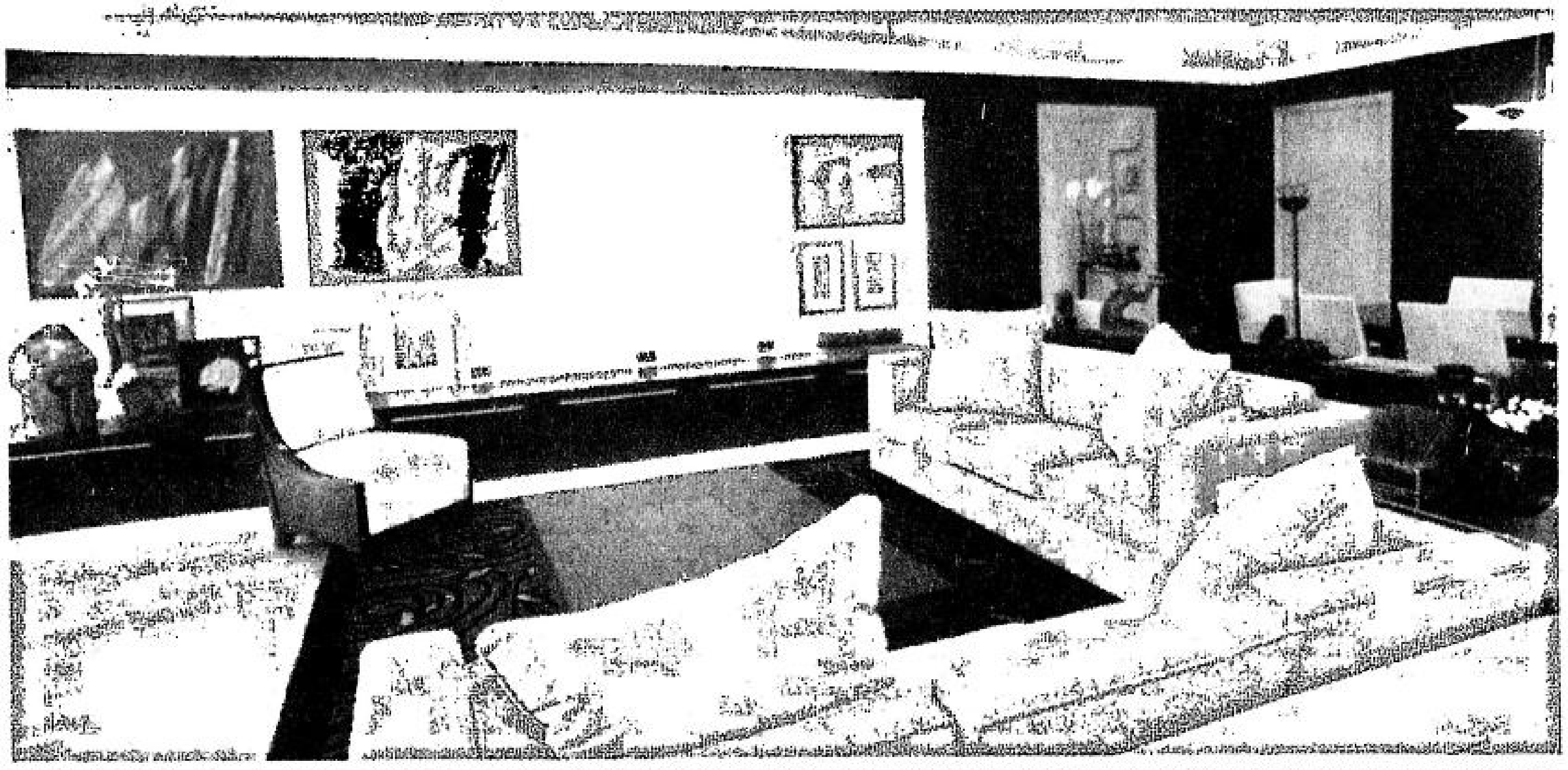
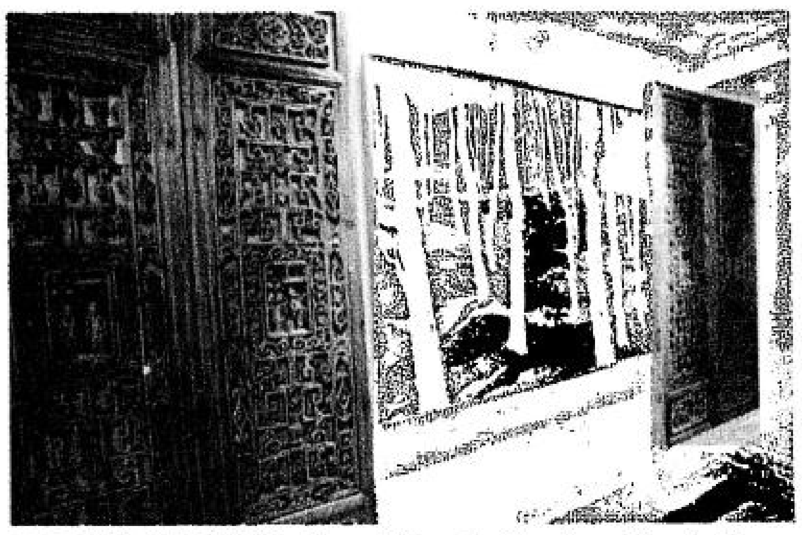


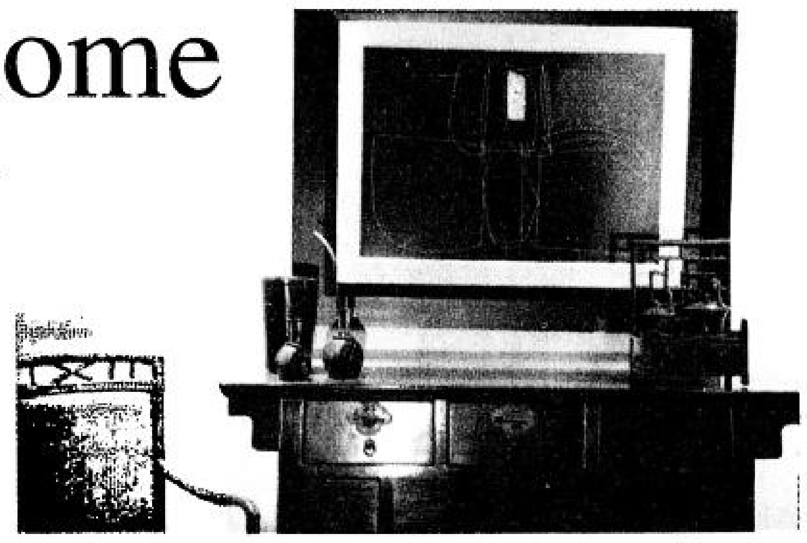
TWO ON TWO. Almario sisters group together Lee Aguinaldo's works. Two of the bigger pieces have been reframed in wenge for more impact.

ORIENTAL FLAVOR. A section of the Rizal unit living room

Making the art masters feel at home



BLACK IS BEAUTIFUL. One of Romulo Olazo's painting in the foyer of the Rizal condominium



BIG IS BEAUTIFUL. Arturo Luz's "Imaginary Landscape 4" has been "enlarged" through several borders made of matte cloth and wenge.

(From page D1)

Interior designer Cynthia Almario, one of the partners of Ivy & Associates, gave us some practical tips on how to achieve this as she showed us two of their latest projects. She and sister Ivy Almario, also an interior designer, worked on two condo units, one at Rockwell's Rizal and the other at the Fort's Essensa. For security reasons, the owners have requested anonymity.

Asian-inspired

The Rizal condo is decidedly Asian-inspired, with plenty of antique furniture pieces made of ju wood sourced from Noble House. The hubby's brother introduced the couple, especially the wife, to the wonderful and, yes, lucrative world of art collection several years ago.

Their collection includes works by such contemporary Filipino artists as BenCab, Lee Aguinaldo, Malang, Bernardo Pacquing and Romulo Olazo. Paintings by National Artists Cesar Legaspi and Arturo Luz also hang prominently in different areas of the house.

"Such a diverse collection is bound to clash," says Almario, "especially in a condo unit where walls are limited. The trick here is to highlight particular pieces and group similar ones in one area."

BenCab's untitled work, for instance, is the focal point of the living room. Apart from being one of the wife's favorites, the Almario sisters chose the particular oil painting depicting a woman in *baro't saya* because its reddish and brownish hues match the living room's niche painted in oxblood.

"The painting looks so warm and inviting," says Almario. "Just right for the *sala*."

This doesn't mean, though, that an interior designer can dictate to the owner what artworks to buy. "The choice of artworks is a reflection of one's taste," she says. "It's something very personal. The most we can do is to advise them to focus on similar color palettes so it would be easier for them to group these paintings later."

Several paintings by Lee Aguinaldo, for instance, are grouped in a quiet sitting area in the living room. Despite the artist's penchant for using lighter shades to form his abstracts, the series manages to stand out because of clever grouping. Two large works ("Bathroom Window" and "Linear No. 38") are paired with two smaller works placed on top of one of the two big paintings.

Ubiquitous metal frames had to go. To make them further stand out, the sisters had the two big paintings reframed in thicker, darker wood inspired by African wenge. They left the frames of the two smaller ones untouched.

Luz's painting by the dining room wall is a different case. The wife insisted that it go there, except that it's not big enough to cover the area and function as a focal point. The sisters succeeded in "enlarging" the painting without earning the artist's ire.

"Again, the original slim wooden frame had to go," says Almario. "We used a matte border before finally framing the painting in wenge." Wenge, she adds, has become their material of choice because it gives the painting a contemporary feel. Owners can use other materials depending on their taste and the prevailing mode.

The owner of the Essensa unit has opted for clean, minimalist lines. To showcase the businessman's numerous paintings by such Filipino artists as Olazo, Ang Kiukok and RM de Leon, Ivy had several panels of raised museum walls built over the cobalt blue walls. Cove lighting acts as a source of light and sets off each white panel from the cobalt blue walls. Similar lighting devices are concealed in several shelves in the living room decked with faux plants and various Oriental-inspired accent pieces.

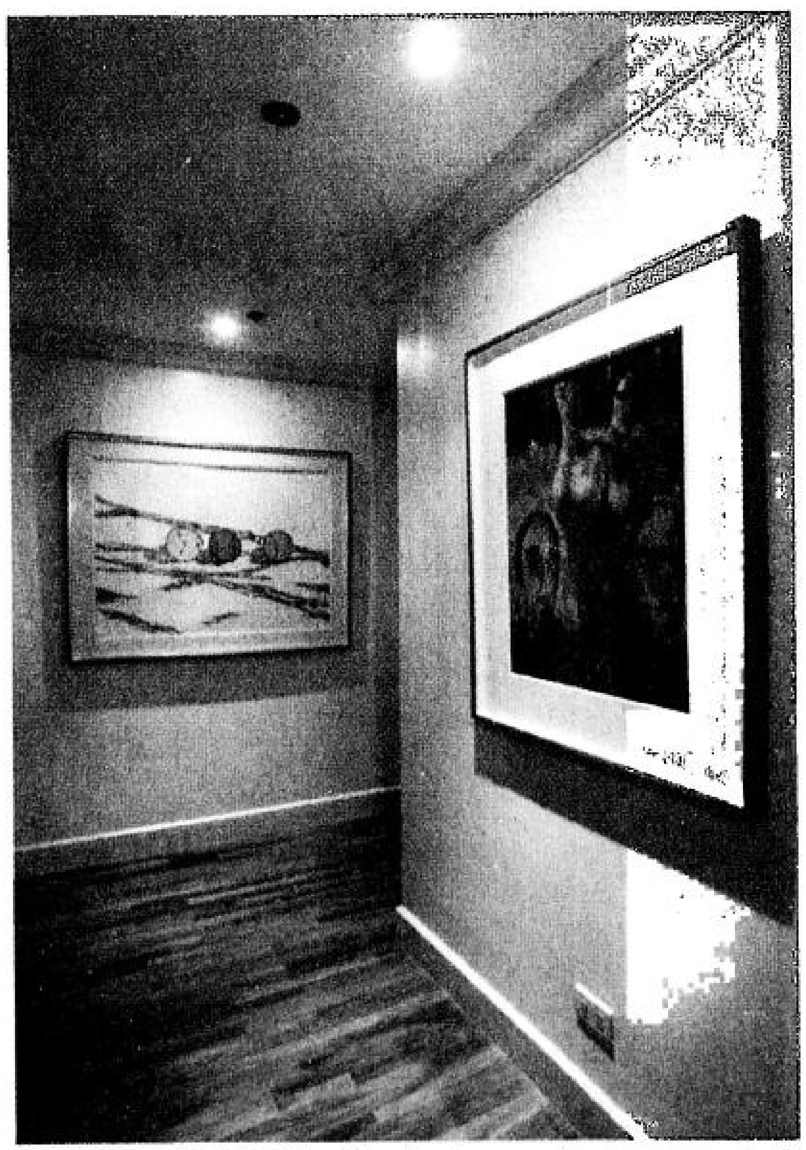
"This is the Olazo corner," says Almario, as she points to the main panel filled with the artist's abstract acrylics. "Again, we grouped some of the paintings together according to artist or color scheme."

The unusual bluish shade, which the owner, an advertising and entertainment executive, chose himself, matches a portion of the area rug. A so-called entertainment center, cabinets with pullout drawers, actually, was also done in wenge finish. The sisters chose a warmer shade of crimson for the kitchen walls.

The foyer's walls are done in maple to match the color of the floor and the main door. To add texture to the area, the sisters chose abstract pieces of artworks done in oil. The owner has little time left to care for plants. Cynthia chose lifelike floral and plant arrangements to add a dash of green to the place.

"The owner had already acquired a sizeable number of artworks before he moved here," she says. "Our job is to bring these pieces together and come up with a cohesive and streamlined look." If the choice of artworks is an extension of one's personality, then these owners' respective characters are well defined.

E-mail the author at enigma0203 @yahoo.com



ARTIST'S CORNER. Olazo's works hang on the museum wall of the Essensa unit.

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Old lamps can make your . . .

(From page D4)

or be practical and use a light bulb. Oil lamps can be modified to make the parts interchangeable," she added as she reminded us to insulate the wires to be safe when it rains.

"Don't worry about designs and styles to fit your landscape. There's a wide range to choose from," she explained. For tall posts, she recommended pulley lamps and other hanging lamps. For low tables, she chose those with heavy base and white glass shade.

Try using interesting antique oil lamps for a change of landscape. If you don't want originals, there are cheaper reproductions available at lamp stores. And for garden ideas, consult Yumi.

By the way, this maverick landscaper also incorporates furniture pieces and *suiseki* (natural stones with artistic shapes) in her arrangements. She runs the family's antique shop called Bahay Sentenyal in Balete Drive, Quezon City, where different kinds of antique gas lamps are displayed. The collection includes beautiful table lamps with white pressed glass shade and black metal bracket, pulley lamps, hurricane lamps and various hanging lamps.

For more interesting information on antique gas lamps, leave your telephone number at 722-7624 or 721-7818

E-mail author at mariettagiron@hotmail.com

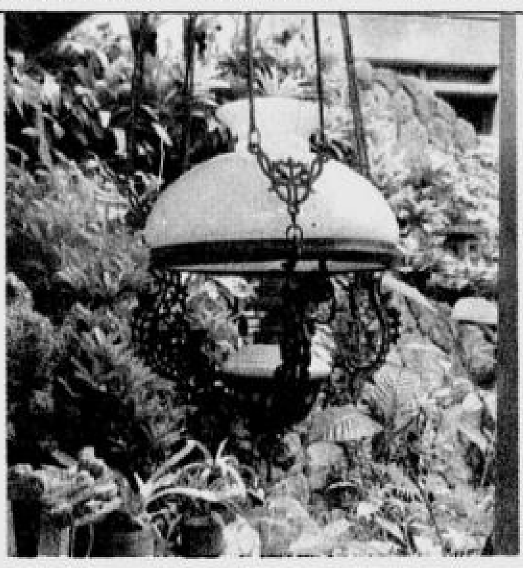

TABLE lamp with movable parts can use either gas-steeped wick or electric bulb.

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Old lamps can make your garden a wonderland

By Tita V. Giron
Photos by Johnny Villena

WHITE dome is made of pressed glass.

YOU'LL be surprised how the quaint *kingke* can transform a garden into a fantastic world at night. Strategically placed—as arranged for us by collector and landscaper Yumi Gupit in her garden—the traditional lamps cast a warm and relaxing glow around the plants. We doubt if today's garden light bulbs could create the same effect.

Kingke is the local name for gas lamps with the distinct glass chimney. The lowly lamp has been part of Philippine history immortalized in the famous picture of Jose Rizal reading a book beside it. Folks in far-flung places with no electricity still use the *kingke*, although they now use kerosene or petroleum instead of the fancy scented oil city folks use on special occasions.

Antique pieces, like those in the possession of local collectors like Yumi, hold many treasured memories. The lamps reminded us of scenes from old movies and *zarzuelas*. As we sat in the garden decked with Yumi's *kingkes*, we imagined *tertulias* (evening socials) and nights of *panguingue* during the days of gaslights and *carruajes* in the Philippines.

However, we have yet to see landscapers other than Yumi using antique lamps as garden accents. They are missing a lot. The interesting lamps add style and distinct ambience to a garden.

"People have the wrong impression that *kingke* always uses kerosene, and thus may be expensive and too bothersome to maintain. [This is] not to mention fears that they can cause fire. But with a little innovation, the wick and oil can be replaced with light bulbs, and folks will not notice the difference," Yumi explained.

The lighted lamps actually serve another purpose aside from giving more drama to a garden. They draw flying insects the way magnet attracts metal. During parties, the lamps can keep insects away from guests.

ANTIQUE *kingke* adds distinct ambience to rare plant garden.

The lamps are interesting conversation pieces, too. And we don't just mean bedtime stories like Aladdin and his magic lamp. In the book "Household Antiques and Heirlooms," for instance, author Felice Sta. Maria devoted a whole chapter to lamps and candles. She wrote about *quinques* (Spanish spelling) casting a romantic spell in the *ilustrado*'s world.

She explained that in the 1980s, American and European manufacturers engaged in a cutthroat competition selling lamps to Filipinos. The market was saturated with an amazing array of lamps that included: hanging lamps for libraries and stores; lamps for tables and banquet, parlor, reading rooms; overhead or stand lamps; night lamps; portable lamps; chandeliers; bracket lamps; student lamps, etc.

"Hurricane lamps look beautiful in the garden," Yumi also pointed out. She had two mounted on inconspicuous posts in the bonsai section of the garden. One lamp had a glass chimney and a brass oil pot while the other was fitted with a light bulb and plug.

To show off three beautiful hanging lamps with milky white glass shades and black metal links, she hooked them to the rafter of the garden rest house. They complemented the antique-finished garden furniture made of recycled wood. When lighted, the lamps' soft glow flooded the fern area and transformed the place into a romantic setting.

"Use your imagination to create a different ambience in the garden. For example, colored glass tubes and matching oil pots can draw attention to a special collection of plants in the garden. You can either use scented oil for effect,

OLD/ p.D3

HURRICANE lamp among ferns

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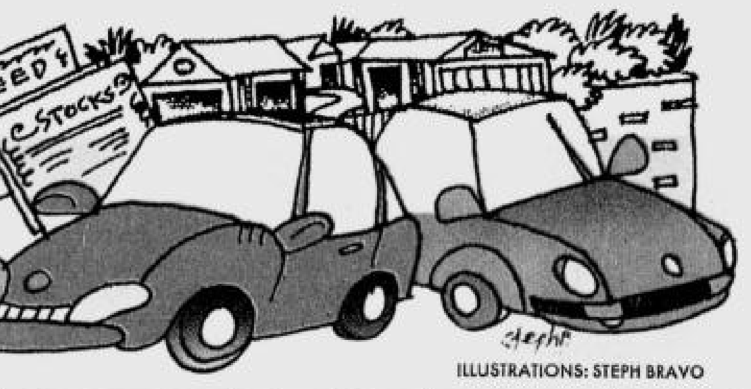
Success indicators should change

BY MIKE GEORGE



ILLUSTRATIONS: STEPH BRAVO

HOW do you define success? Is it sim-ply the completion of the next task, another job well done, a promise kept, an examination passed, a medal won, a mountain climbed?

Whatever we believe success to be will have a profound influence on our life.

If we were to follow the trends of the world, then success would be measured by acquisition. The more you have, the more successful you are. More can mean almost any quantity—objects, money, assets, celebrity, fame and fans. In terms of position, it simply means moving higher.

Success means more when we inherit and absorb the prevalent beliefs that the world is a place of scarcity, that the purpose of life is survival, that we must accumulate to prosper and that the more you get, the happier you are. We are led to believe there is not enough to go round and we speak the common tongue of "not enough-ness!" We then strive and struggle for what we consider is our rightful share. More is not only good, but we are applauded when we attain it (although it could also arouse envy). And then we wonder why there is so much greed, consumption, accumulation, manipulation, polarization, conflict and war.

Even our education systems are geared toward producing people equipped with character and skills to make them produce **more**. Economic growth, an indicator of national success, is based on **more** production and selling. And amid all this we continue to avoid the connection between the philosophy of "more" and the unprecedented levels of unhappiness, abuse and breakdown of human relationships worldwide.

Some say that because we have more telephones there is more communication among more people in more countries every day than any other time in history. But communication of what, electronic symbols, packets of data, cold information? This is far from human communication.

We seldom nourish each other at the level of mind and spirit over a telephone. We develop more intimate relationships with our technotoys than with other humans.

So what does it mean to be successful? At what level, in what context and by whose standards? If we were to ponder this question long enough, it would challenge us at the deepest level. It would invite us to review and probably revise our core values. But we don't want that because we might have to change how we think and what we do. We live instead in avoidance and denial, adhering to traditional belief while wondering why contentment and fulfillment are so elusive.

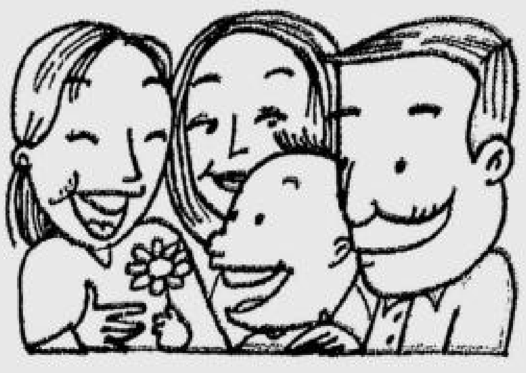
Imagine for a moment that every single class in the world spent one year discussing and debating the question, "What is success?," inside out and upside down. Might be not all the time and every day, but it would be a theme they return to often to develop and explore. What would our children tell us? Would success mean less and not more for them? Would we have the humility to facilitate their discussion and allow them to share with us their thoughts, instead of imposing our inherited beliefs, definitions and conditions? Would we be threatened if they defined success as a simpler, more considerate, caring, sharing, spiritual state of being and giving, and not the acquisition, accumulation and possession of things? Would we have the patience and the faith to listen and to learn from them? Or do we intuitively know they would be wiser than us and might pull the rug from under our comfortable feet?

If we gave ourselves time to explore this question, we would likely arrive at the fairly obvious insight that success is not about material things or something that can be possessed. It is really a state of being. We might call it contentment or happiness or even peace. These are the deepest and most meaningful indicators of success, but only when they are not dependent on anything outside ourselves.

Other signs of success to someone who shuns the more accepted norms:

- To be able to act with total honesty and integrity; to be both content with oneself and have others be content with you; to feel peaceful and stable even when there is crisis or chaos around you; to value what you are more than what you have;
- To accept full responsibility for all thoughts, feelings, words and actions;
- To see past the weaknesses/mistakes of others and focus on their inherent goodness; to put thoughts and words into action without delay; to be able to let go of the past instantly;
- To give without hoping for anything in return.

These indicators are intangible and no one else can measure them except you personally. But we seldom, if ever, ask ourselves why we cannot achieve these inner states of being and enlightened behavior. But unless we can achieve all this, how are we going to be content with ourselves?



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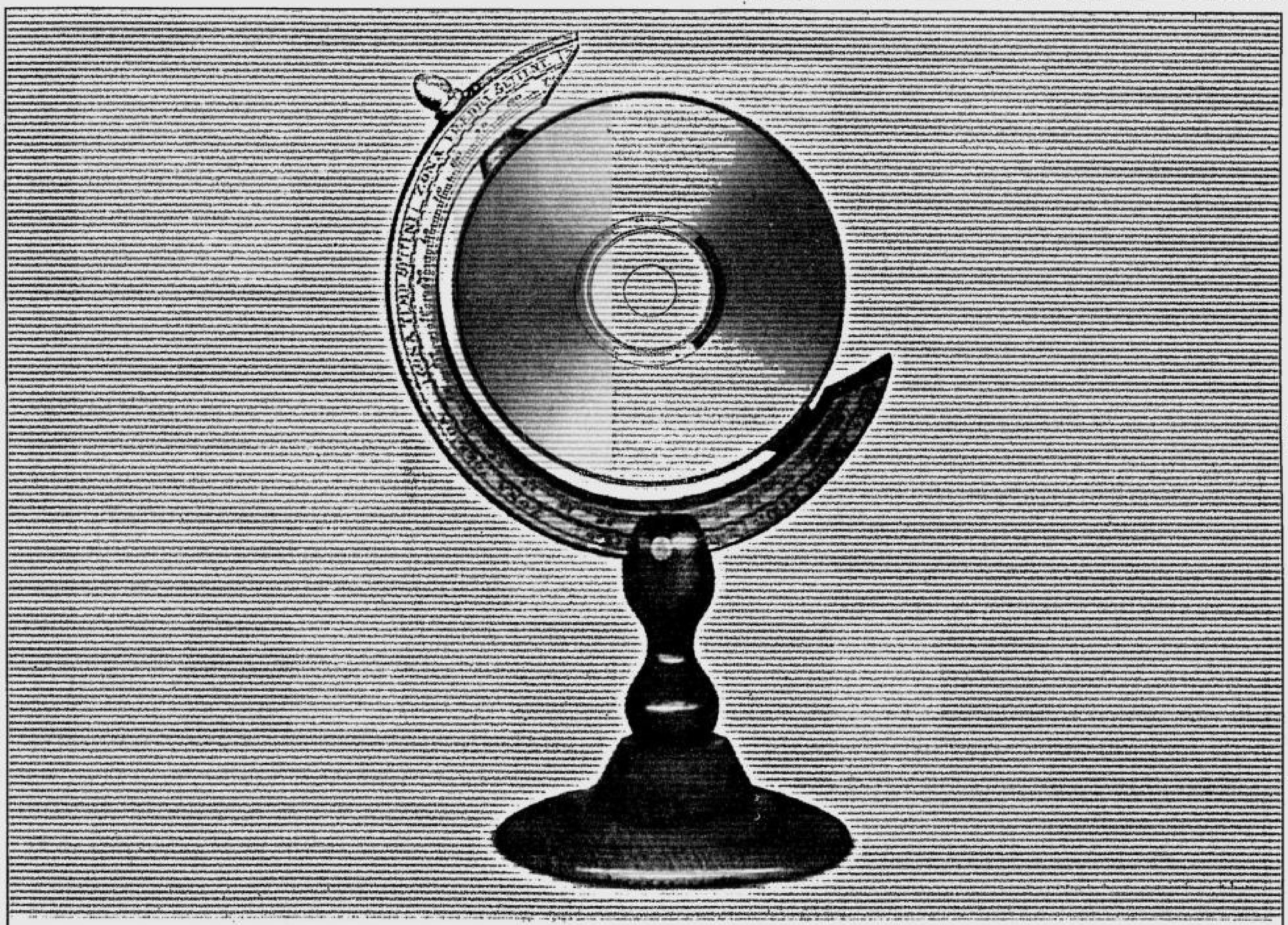

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Man at the top

By Camille T. Cruz

NAVY V-neck T-shirt with bull's-eye target, P895

PHOTOS: CHITO VECINA

THERE are different kinds of men. There are the classic preppy-boy types. They are usually seen on a regular day wearing slacks, a leather belt with a silver or gold buckle and a plain-colored tailored crisp shirt and tie (depending on the workplace). Then there are those who mix the classic and the preppy. These types know how to blend clothes well. They can wear a purple tailored shirt with a great pair of slim-cut charcoal gray slacks without looking GQ-contrived. They can also be found wearing a printed casual short sleeved shirt and linen pants.

Then there are the sporty types. They may be found in a T-shirt matched with tailored cut-off pants or a knit top worn with khakis. Sporty isn't just gym attire or tennis gear. It may mean a little detail that casts a sporty look. Then you have the alternative types. These guys do not necessarily go in rags; but they usually carry a just-came-out-of-the-clubbing-scene look. They can be found in a T-shirt with an interesting and strong graphic print on it, or a hat or jacket thrown in.

The point is there are almost a hundred ways to dress without crossing over to another's style. It will be a big help if a clothing store can provide variety. About this, one can find a variety of different outfits all under one roof: Topman.

Everything found in this store can be worn. For example, a nice black leather belt with a big silver heavy buckle bearing the UK flag can be worn with a classic shirt and clean-cut straight

> In order for a man to find a look that clicks, he should go for variety in shopping

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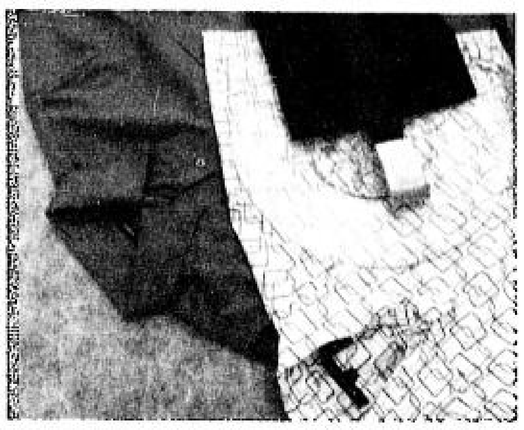

PURPLE long-sleeved shirt, P1,495; black straight-cut pants, P1,495; black belt with heavy silver buckle, P745

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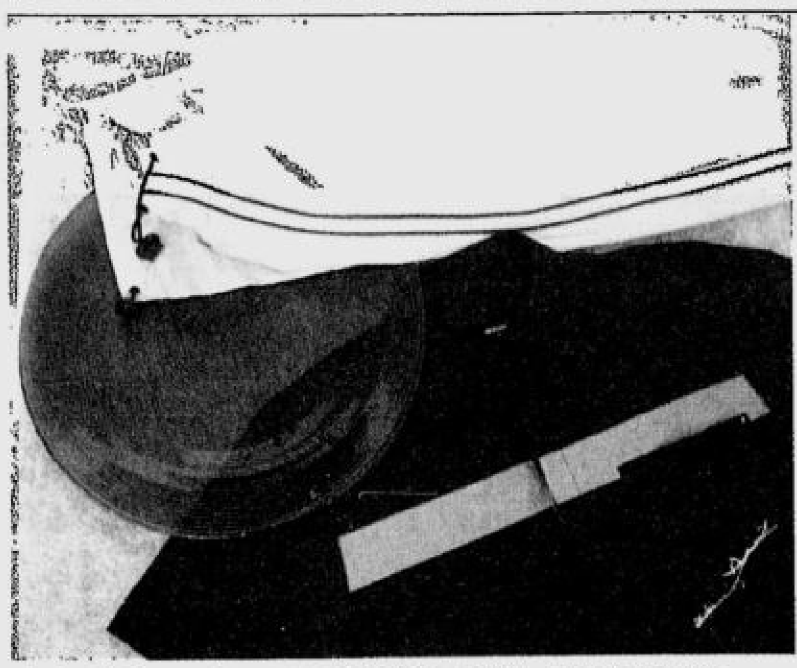

slacks. It is an edgy way of looking classic without becoming a fashion victim. Then you can try a pair of power-gray linen drawstring pants with a not-so-skimpy-looking tank top.

To define one's look, it is best to keep on looking for those key elements that make a look click. Toward this, shopping variety is needed.

NAVY shirt with horizontal stripe P1,495; khaki scuba midcalf pants, P1,345

Precision styling makes for distinctive shirts

CLOTHES can make the man, especially with a little help from Ascot Chang custom-made shirts.

The shop, named after the renowned Shanghai tailor who started making shirts when he was 14, has maintained its reputation for high quality, custom-made outfits with a distinctive look. From the first shop in Hong Kong in 1955, the precision for which Chang was known continues to distinguish the numerous branches set up in America and Asia.

The Philippine branch in Makati Shangri-La is flourishing as well. Claudia Bermudez, co-owner of the franchise shop, explains that a man who has worn an Ascot Chang custom-tailored shirt will not want ready-to-wear clothes again. An AC shirt captures clients' varied and unique tastes in line with Chang philosophy that "your body, your style and your taste must design the shirt."

Current AC clients include the Philippines' movers and shakers and world-renowned personalities like George Bush Sr. and George W. Bush, and Tommy Hilfiger.

Clients wishing to have an AC shirt made can have their measurements taken at the Makati Shangri-La shop. AC professional tailors trained in Hong Kong can also go to clients' offices or homes to take the measurements.

Clients can also opt to do their own measuring with the help of an order catalog. Master cutters create the shirt in Hong Kong, which is delivered after a few weeks. Prices range from P 3,200 to P10,000.

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GMA didn't mention the environment

SEEING GREEN

Doris Gaskell Nuyda

MANY of the areas touching on the life of Filipinos mentioned by President Macapagal Arroyo in her State of the Nation Address hit the nail on the head. They are essential and of immediate importance. But she seems to have missed out on one.

This is the environment with all its attendant problems. Somehow it was omitted or someone forgot to give her the facts and figures. Environmentalists waiting for encouraging words or some go-signal that would give direction to their efforts were quick to notice this omission. And their disappointment is showing.

There is Louie Arriola, president of the 12-year-old Earth Center, and director of the 3-year-old Vibrant Earth Foundation, both composed of a network of NGOs. Arriola realizes that "(p)erhaps, pressed for immediate calmic solutions to widespread hunger and deprivation of a growing number of our population, President Macapagal Arroyo's recent Sona failed to mention anything about ecological preservation and regeneration as a long-term approach toward self-sufficiency in our country."

He eagerly waited, he says, for a word from her on how to avert a total forest baldness situation "since our green cover has declined to below 20 percent. "I was hoping she would ask at least half of the population to plant trees, particularly fruit trees, which *kaingeros* are not likely to turn into charcoal because they could be a steady source of income."

He also fears that her program on low-cost housing might mean conversion of rice fields into housing projects. She could follow in the footsteps of her father, the late President Diosdado Macapagal, who put up the first high-rise tenement housing units to spare the *bukids* (farms) where he grew up and which provide our main staple crop. He suggests that such housing projects be built vertically.

She might have mentioned the need to save our seas, he adds, not only from threats of piracy and banditry, the likes of the Abu Sayyaf, but also from the rascals who destroy marine sanctuaries—those who extract our corals and smuggle them out of the country, and from those who wantonly fish with cyanide and dynamite. The President could ask the Congress to pass laws to make such unlawful acts heinous crimes. Otherwise, in a decade or so, we may not be able to gather seafood from our seas.

Ecotourism is another area that could have aroused her interest as an economist. "It could be made into a major dollar-earning industry," writes Arriola. "I longed to hear her declare our country as an ecotourism haven. We don't have to build buildings and spend millions in infrastructure. All we have to do is clear the paths and make them safe." As example, he cites the eruption of Mayon Volcano, which could be made a major tourism event (with all the safeguards of course), thus turning a calamity into opportunity.

On the matter of waste management, it will be recalled that President Macapagal Arroyo's first bill was the Solid Waste Management Act. But the tons and tons of garbage all over the metropolis did not merit a single mention in her Sona, or how she intends to implement the law.

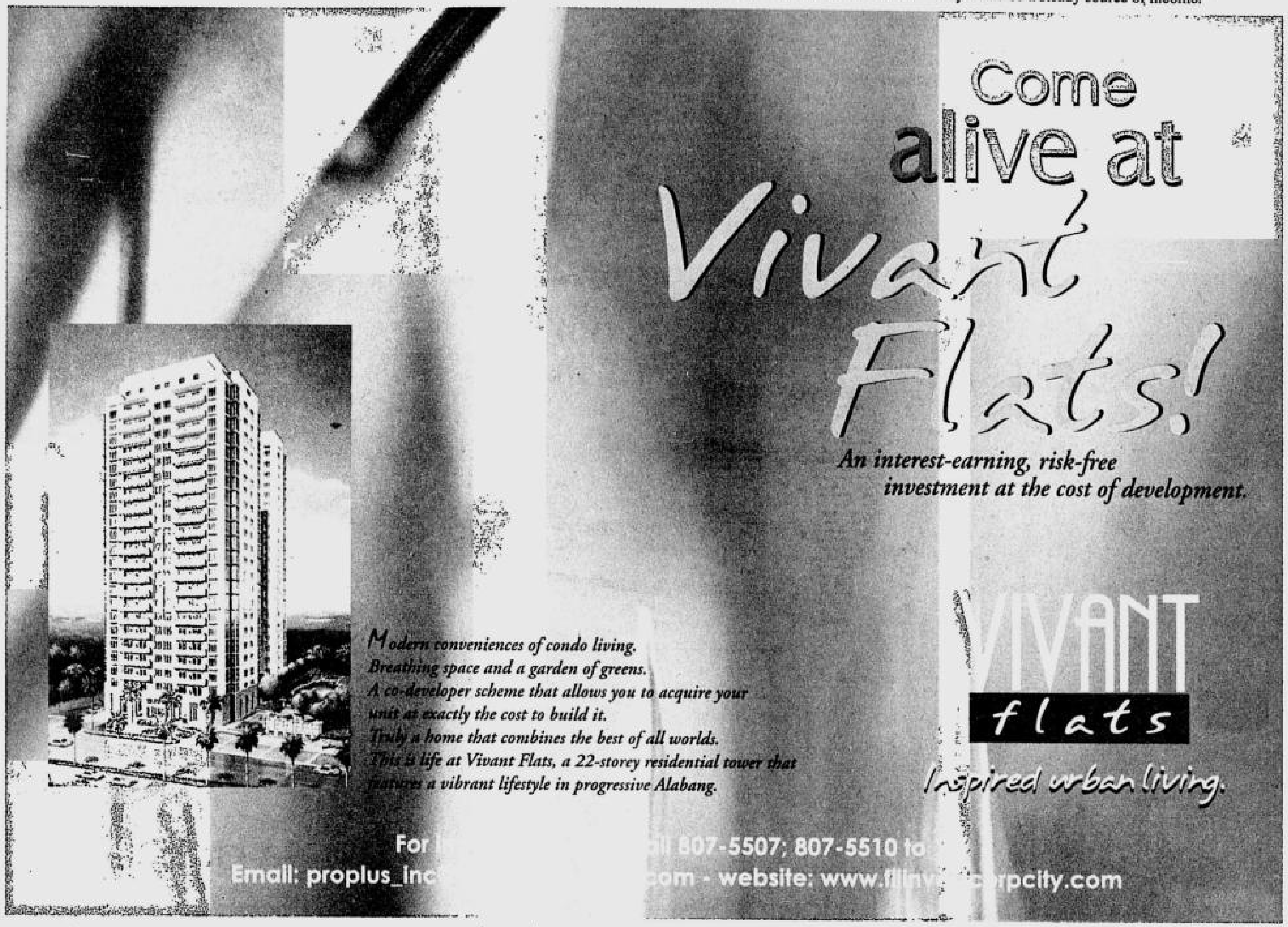
Ecological Society of the Philippines

Antonio M. Claparols, president of the Ecological Society of thee Philippines and regional councilor of the International Union for Conservation of Nature, did not react to President Macapagal Arroyo's Sona when he expressed his views on the twin issues of environment and poverty. But they could well have been her cue. They are problems, says Claparols, that this country needs to address as one.

He writes: "How can we fight poverty if we do not address the environment? I remember as a youngster my late father telling us not to give money to strong-bodied beggars, his point being that in our country, one just needed to throw a seed on the ground and it would supply you with food. One had only to go fishing and there would be enough fish to bring home to the family.

"That was then. Today, we throw a seed and our topsoil will not allow it to grow. Our once pristine rainforests are almost all gone, and yet logging continues unabated. Flashfloods wash away our rich soil, destroying our crops, homes and the marine environment. We cast our nets but there is no fish to catch. Their habitats have been destroyed, the waters are polluted.

Just as polluted is our air, despite the Clean Air Act recently passed. We have tons of environmental laws and no one to implement them. It is time to take stock for all of us are affected. We need to make sacrifices and changes in our ways, if we are to solve the problems of ecology and poverty."



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